Owen M. Neary

IRISH 1798 COLLECTION

MEMOIRS

OF THE

POLITICAL AND PRIVATE LIFE OF

JAMES CAULFIELD,

EARL OF CHARLEMONT,

Knight of St. Patrick, &c. &c. &c.

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MEMOIRS

OF

JAMES, EARL OF CHARLEMONT.

1782.

THAT celebrated convention now drew near. It originated from the southern battalion of the first Ulster regiment, commanded by Lord Charlemont. The officers, and delegates of that battalion, met on the 28th of December, 1781; when, having declared that they beheld with the utmost concern the little attention paid to the constitutional rights of Ireland, by the majority of those, whose duty it was to establish and preserve them, they invited every volunteer association throughout the province of Ulster, to send delegates to deliberate on the alarming situation of public affairs; and fixed on Friday, the 15th February, 1782, for such assembly of

delegates at Dungannon. On that very important day, the representatives of one hundred and forty-three corps of the volunteers of Ulster met, as appointed. Colonel William Irvine took the chair. They were all persons of most respectable property; many possessed indeed very considerable estates. Their loyalty and patriotism were equally known and acknowledged. They entered into twenty resolutions, declaratory of the rights, the grievances of Ireland, and, at the same time, their exultation in the relaxation of the penal laws against the Roman Catholics. Their concluding address, memorable for its pointed brevity and spirit, is given here.

"*To the right Honourable, and Honourable the Minority in both Houses of Parliament.*

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

"We thank you for your noble and spirited, though hitherto ineffectual efforts, in defence of the great constitutional rights of your country. Go on! The almost unanimous voice of the people is with you; and in a free country, the voice of the people must prevail. We know our duty to our Sovereign, and are loyal. We know our duty to ourselves, and are resolved to be free.

We seek for our rights, and no more than our rights; and in so just a pursuit we should doubt the being of a Providence, if we doubted of success."

Never was any address more triumphantly, more cordially received. It was malignantly hoped by a few, that some irregularity of phrase, some deviation from constitutional language, would afford a pretext, for at least dividing, or weakening the associations. But that hope now vanished, and foes, as well as friends, seemed equally to applaud them.

In somewhat more than a month after this eventful transaction, the British ministry at last gave way. The Irish parliament had been adjourned from the 14th of March to the 16th of April, 1782. On the 14th of April the Duke of Portland came to Dublin as Viceroy, Lord Carlisle having sent his resignation to London by the hands of Mr. Eden. Colonel, now General Fitzpatrick, had preceded the Duke by some days, as his secretary. A gentleman, who to very agreeable and excellent talents, added a most firm and manly mind. Though not born in Ireland, he was of truly ancient and illustrious Irish lineage, being descended from the

Princess of Ossory.* This circumstance particularly, as well as his general political character, rendered him very acceptable to the people of this country. The Duke of Portland's arrival in Dublin was hailed with the loudest acclamations.—A Whig ministry, at the head of which was Lord Rockingham, and a Whig Viceroy, who had cheerfully co-operated with that ministry, and was personally much esteemed by Lord Charlemont, were, of course, in the highest degree, agreeable to him. General Fitzpatrick on his coming to Dublin, prevented Lord Charlemont's visit to him, by calling almost immediately at Charlemont House; he had an interview with his Lordship, when he delivered a letter from the Marquis of Rockingham to his old and esteemed friend, the good Earl. Part of it is as follows:

"My Dear Lord Charlemont,

"The long and pleasing friendship which has

* The well-known, and erudite Antiquary, Doctor Ledwich, says, "The noble representative of the family of Fitzpatrick, the present Earl of Upper Ossory, (brother to General Fitzpatrick,) possesses the advowson of particular churches, and a large estate in Upper Ossory: patrimonies

so mutually and so cordially existed between your Lordship and me, for many, many years, may now, I trust, facilitate what I am sure has been the object of our public conduct,—the mutual advantage and prosperity of both these countries. National distrusts and jealousies will not have the smallest weight on either of our minds.

"The Duke of Portland being appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, is, I think, my dear Lord, a pretty good pledge of the fair intentions of his Majesty's ministers.—His Grace's character, and disposition of mind, as well as the principles on which he has long acted, are well known to your Lordship, and I cannot but hope, that many advantages will arise from a trust and confidence in his character, which may produce the happiest effects, both in the commencement and progress of such plans as may be suggested. I can assure your Lordship, that his Majesty's present

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descended to him through a line of progenitors, for more than one thousand years;—an instance not perhaps to be paralleled in Europe."

ministers will not loiter in a business of such magnitude,—This day his Majesty sends a message to the House of Commons, stating, that distrusts and jealousies have arisen in Ireland, and that it is highly necessary to take them into immediate consideration, in order to a final adjustment. The Duke of Portland will set out for Ireland to morrow evening. His Grace is empowered to send the same message to the Parliament in Ireland.—I should hope that an adjournment of the House of Commons in Ireland, for a fortnight, or three weeks, in order to give the Duke of Portland the opportunity of enquiring into the opinions of your Lordship, and of the gentlemen of the first weight and consequence, will be readily assented to.—I cannot think that it would be good policy in the House of Commons of Ireland, to carry on measures, at this juncture, which should appear as measures to extort. In truth, my dear Lord, I think the time is come, when a new system, and new arrangement of connection between the two kingdoms, must be settled, to the mutual satisfaction, and the reciprocal interests of both. Let us unite our endeavours in so good a work. —I cannot conclude, without expressing to your Lordship, how anxious I shall be to hear

from you.—Lady Rockingham begs to present her best compliments to your Lordship, and Lady Charlemont.

" I have the honour to be,

" dear Lord Charlemont,

" Most affectionately your's,

" ROCKINGHAM.

" Grosvenor-Square, Tuesday, P. M.
Five o'clock, April the 9th, 1782.

" I write in a great hurry, as I expect Colonel Fitzpatrick to call for the letter every moment. He sets out from hence."

Lord Charlemont's answer was as follows: The date of the letter is forgotten in the copy, but it appears to have been written directly after the meeting of Parliament, which was two days subsequent to the Duke of Portland's arrival.

" MY DEAREST LORD,

"As in writing to your Lordship I find it indispensably necessary that I should follow and communicate the immediate feelings of my heart, I cannot, at this conjuncture, begin a letter to you,

without expressing my joy and exultation at the late happy change of administration, a change in which I rejoice as a patriot, and as a friend. For, since the welfare of the empire at large is, I trust, one of my warmest wishes, can any thing be more pleasing to a mind so impressed, than to find that empire rescued from ruin, principally by the man whom I have been so long used in the most eminent degree to love and honour? The gratification of another passion, indeed the ruling of my soul, intervenes also to complete my satisfaction, and the love of my country induces me to exult in the power of a man, whose well known love of general liberty gives me the best-grounded reason to hope that he will employ that power in restoring the invaluable blessing of freedom to every part of these dominions. From what I have now said, your Lordship will readily conceive, that no greater misfortune could possibly befal me, than to be prevented in any way from giving my whole support to an administration, which is, in every respect, so dear to me. But, thank heaven, I have little reason to dread any such event; yet, unfortunately, a difficulty occurred at setting out. The adjournment proposed by your Lordship was absolutely impracticable, and a thorough knowledge of the state of this country would, I

am sure, convince you, that it would have been extremely imprudent to have hazarded the proposition. The Parliamentary declaration of right was universally looked up to as an essential and necessary preliminary. It was a measure pointed out by the people, from which nothing could ever have induced them to recede, and if an adjournment had been proposed, the new administration would undoubtedly have been defeated at their first setting out. The message sent to Parliament rendered an immediate proceeding still more indispensable. The King desired to be informed of the causes of discontent, and those causes could not have been too soon ascertained, and declared, in order to their speedy removal. The nation was to the last degree anxious, and the minds of all men were attentively fixed on the event of the 16th April; and so decidedly was the sense of the people against any adjournment, that by giving way in a matter so very repugnant to their wishes, we whose power of support consist principally, if not wholly in our popularity, might have endangered that influence, which, upon the expected and necessary redress of all our grievances, we wish to employ in your behalf. These reasons, and many others, too tedious to be now detailed, induced me to think the measure proposed, not only improper, but

highly imprudent also; and they seemed to have some weight with the Duke of Portland, who honoured me with a long conference on the subject, and who, with great prudence, as well as goodness, gave up the point; neither will he, I am confident, have any reason to repent his concession. At the same time, least it should be thought that our aversion to postponement concealed under it the least distrust of the present administration, I think it necessary to declare to your Lordship, as I did to the Lord Lieutenant, that my mind is incapable of harbouring any such principle; my intimate knowledge of you must naturally and necessarily banish all distrust. Yes, my dearest Lord, I look up to you with the most unbounded confidence, a confidence founded upon a thorough knowledge of your principles, and your wisdom. We ask but for our rights—our uncontrovertible rights—restore them to us, and for ever unite in the closest and best-rivetted bonds of affection, the kingdom of Ireland to her beloved, though hitherto unkind sister!—Bind us to you by the only chains that can connect us, the only chains we will ever consent to wear,—the dear ties of mutual love, and mutual freedom. But I have already detained you much too long. Pardon this unconscionable letter. I shall hasten to conclude by returning you my most sincere

acknowledgements for the honour and favour of your's, and by assuring you that, as I loved you out of office, my affection still equally continues, even though you are a great minister, a rank of men, with which my heart has not often been much connected.—Lady Charlemont joins with me in best respects to Lady Rockingham, and desires her sincere compliments of congratulation to your Lordship. Believe me, my dearest Lord, that I speak much less than the sentiments of my heart, when I assure you, that

"I have the honour to be,

"Your Lordship's most faithful,

"most affectionate humble servant,

"CHARLEMONT."

The following letter from Mr. Fox should have preceded Lord Rockingham's, as it was written before his. Both were however received much about the same time by Lord Charlemont. "With Mr. Fox" his Lordship said, "I had the honour and pleasure of an old acquaintance; his wonderful talents, and astonishing parliamentary exertions, will be remembered with the highest applause, as long as oratory is held in estimation; that is to say, as long as the constitution exists." The frankness, simplicity, and wise, because

honest, policy of that great statesman, appear in the subsequent letter to Lord Charlemont.

"My Dear Lord,

"If I had occasion to write to you a month ago, I should have written with great confidence that you would believe me perfectly sincere, and would receive any thing that came from me with the partiality of an old acquaintance, and one who acted upon the same political principles.—I hope you will now consider me in the same light, but I own I write with much more diffidence, as I am much more sure of your kindness to me personally, than of your inclination to listen with favour to any thing that comes from a Secretary of State.—The principal business of this letter is to inform you, that the Duke of Portland is appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Colonel Fitzpatrick, his Secretary; and when I have said this, I need not add, that I feel myself on every private, as well as public account, most peculiarly interested in the success of their administration. That their persons and characters are not disagreeable to your Lordship, I may venture to assure myself, without being too sanguine, and I think myself equally certain, that there are not in the world two men whose general way of thinking upon political

subjects is more exactly consonant to your own. It is not therefore too much to desire and hope, that you will at least look upon the administration of such men with rather a more favourable eye, and incline to trust them rather more, than you could do most of those who have been their predecessors. Why should not the complete change of system that has happened in this country have the same effect there that it has here? and why should not those who used to compose the opposition in Ireland, become the principal supporters of the new administration there, on the very grounds on which they opposed the old one? In short, why should not the whigs, (I mean in principle, not in name,) unite in every part of the empire, to establish their principles so firmly, that no future faction shall be able to destroy them? With regard to the particular points between the two countries, I am really not yet master of them sufficiently to discuss them, but I can say in general, that the new ministry have no other wish than to settle them in the way that may be most for the real advantage of both countries, whose interests cannot be distinct. This is very general indeed, and if this language came from persons whose principles were less known to you, I should not expect you to consider it as any thing but mere

words; as it comes from those, of whom I know your good opinion, I trust it will pass for something more. All we desire is favourable construction, and assistance as far as is compatible with your principles; for to endeavour to persuade men to disgrace themselves, (even were it practicable, as in this instance I know it is not) is very far from being part of the system of the ministry. The particular time of year at which this change happens, is productive of many great inconveniences, especially as it will be very difficult for the Duke of Portland to be at Dublin before your Parliament meets; but I cannot help hoping that all reasonable men will concur in removing some of these difficulties, and that a short adjournment will not be denied, if asked. I do not throw out this as knowing from any authority that it will be proposed, but as an idea that suggests itself to me, and in order to show that I wish to talk with you and consult with you in the same frank manner in which I should have done before I was in this situation, so very new to me. I have been so used to think ill of all the ministers whom I did know, and to suspect those whom I did not, that when I am obliged to call myself a minister, I feel as if I put myself into a very suspicious character; but I do assure you I am the very same man, in all

respects, that I was when you knew me, and honoured me with some share in your esteem; that I maintain the same opinions, and act with the same people. I beg your pardon for troubling you with so long a letter; but the great desire I feel in common with my friends, that we should retain your good opinion, must make my apology.

"Pray make my best compliments to Mr. Grattan, and tell him, that the Duke of Portland and Fitzpatrick, are thoroughly impressed with the consequence of his approbation, and will do all they can to deserve it. I do most sincerely hope, that he may hit upon some line that may be drawn honourably and advantageously for both countries, and that, when that is done, he will shew the world that there may be a government in Ireland, of which he is not ashamed to make a part. That country can never prosper, where what should be the ambition of men of honour, is considered as a disgrace. I must beg pardon again for the unconscionable length of this letter. I do assure you, my dear Lord, that there is no one who more values your esteem, or is more solicitous for the continuance of it, than

"Your very obedient, humble servant,

"C. J. Fox.

"Grafton-Street, April 4th, 1782."

Lord Charlemont immediately returned the following answer.

" DEAR SIR,

" Give me leave in the first place to return you my most sincere thanks for the honour and favour of your letter; your finding leisure at this very busy period, when every moment of your time is precious to yourself, and to the Empire, for the recollection of an old friend, is a kindness which I had no reason to expect, and for which I shall ever be grateful. You do me also honour, and justice in supposing that I should at all times receive anything that comes from you with a great degree of partiality, and though your idea of the difference between the man, and the minister, be in some respects a just one, I *can* conceive, that a man in high ministerial office may be a perfectly honest man; indeed the arrangement of the present administration would alone be sufficient to persuade me of this possibility. No man can be more rejoiced than I am at the late happy, though tardy, change. I rejoice in it as a friend to individuals, but more especially as a member of the Empire at large, which will probably be indebted to it for its salvation. I hope also, and doubt not, that I shall have reason to rejoice in it as an Irishman, for I cannot

conceive that they, who are intent upon the great work of restoring the empire, should not be ardently attentive to the real welfare of all its parts, or, that true Whigs, genuine lovers of liberty, should not wish to diffuse this invaluable blessing through every part of those dominions, whose interests they are called upon to administer. The appointment of the Duke of Portland, and his secretary, is a good presage. I know and respect their principles, and should be truly unhappy, if any thing in their conduct respecting this country, should prevent my perfect co-operation with them. For, my dear Sir, with every degree of affection for our sister kingdom, with every regard for the interests of the empire at large, I am still an *Irishman.* I pride myself in the appellation, and will in every particular act as such, at the same time declaring, that I most sincerely and heartily concur with you in thinking, that the interests of England and Ireland, cannot be distinct, and that therefore in acting as an Irishman, I may always hope to perform the part of a true Englishman also. With regard to what you hint respecting an adjournment, I sincerely hope it will not be desired, as the matter seems to me to involve some great, not to say insurmountable difficulties. The eyes of all the nation are eagerly fixed

on the meeting of the 16th. The House is convened for that day, by this very particular summons; that *every member should attend, as he tenders the rights of parliament.* The declaration of an independent legislature is, on that day, to be agitated, and the minds of all men are so fixed upon the event, which they have every reason to imagine will be favourable to their wishes, that I should greatly fear the consequences of any postponement, especially as, from sad experience, the people have been taught to suppose, that a question postponed is, *at least*, weakened. This too is an act of the House, and the House alone.—Such are the difficulties which occur. However, though they appear insuperable, so strong is our wish not to throw any obstacle in the way of the present administration, that we shall wait to be determined by events. I have seen Grattan, and have communicated the kind paragraph in your letter concerning him. He desires his most sincere thanks to you, for your goodness, and friendly opinion of him. We are both of us precisely of the same mind. We respect and honour the present administration. We adore the principle on which it is founded. We look up to its members with the utmost confidence for their assistance in the great work of general freedom, and

should be happy to support them in Ireland, in the manner which may be most beneficial to them, and honourable to us; *consulted, but not considered.**

"The people at large must indeed entertain a strong partiality for the present Ministers. True whigs must rejoice in the prevalence of whiggish principles. The nation wishes to support the men who opposed the detested American war. Let our rights be acknowledged, and secured to us. Those rights which no man can controvert, but which, to a *true* Whig, are self-evident; and those lives and fortunes which are now universally pledged for the emancipation of our country, will then be as cheerfully, as universally, pledged for the defence of our sister kingdom.

"You have thought it necessary to apologize for the length of your letter, though such an apology was needless, as I never received any

* This is rather imperfectly expressed. His Lordship, I presume, meant to say, that they wished to be consulted, as statesmen, but not *considered,* in any new ministerial arrangement of offices, then likely to take place.

which gave me greater pleasure. What then ought I to say for mine? But excuses will only take up more of your precious time. I will therefore at once conclude, begging you to present my most affectionate compliments to all my friends, and particularly to my dear Lord Rockingham, whom I called *dear*, when out of office, and have therefore a right to do so now. Be assured, my dear Sir, that nothing can be more valuable to me, than your friendship and esteem, and that I desire nothing more ardently, than constant opportunities of cultivating them, and of proving to you how sincerely I am,

"Your most faithful, and

"Obedient humble servant,

"CHARLEMONT."

The proceedings of the 16th of April, 1782, have been given in many publications, but it is not so generally known that the resolutions which Mr. Grattan moved on that day, were objected to at the Castle. Not perhaps in substance, for the English ministry meant fairly, but some modifications were proposed, which, according to Lord Charlemont, would have diminished their weight and efficacy. Perhaps

the Duke of Portland might have imagined, that they would not be acceded to by the British cabinet, unless in some degree altered. Lord Charlemont had some interviews with his Grace on the subject, and declared, that it was the intention of his friends, as well as himself, to move the resolutions in both Houses without any alteration, and that administration might take what part it pleased. In such a state of uncertainty were matters, that, when the House of Commons met, it was not known by Lord Charlemont, or his particular friends, whether the resolutions, or address, which Mr. Grattan intended to move, would be opposed or not. He prefaced his declaration of right, with a speech which breathed all his wonted ardour, and fire of patriotism. Notwithstanding his exertions he was particularly indisposed, and, as Lord Charlemont often mentioned, if ever spirit could be said to act independent of body, it was on that occasion. He stated the three great causes of complaint on the part of Ireland; the declaratory statute of George the first, the perpetual mutiny bill, and the unconstitutional powers of the Irish Privy Council. The repeal of the two statutes, and the abolition of the most improper sway of the council, were, he

said, the terms on which he would support government. The address to his Majesty, stating the grievances of Ireland, and the declaration of right, were then moved by him, in answer to the King's message to Parliament. The sense of the House appeared so unequivocal in favour of the address, that if administration had any intention, at the opening of the debate, to oppose it, and the annexed resolutions, all such opposition was now relinquished. Colonel Fitzpatrick acted with his usual good sense, and the address passed unanimously. In fact, had government shewed itself any way hostile to the address, it must have been left in a minority, as several of the old court had now pledged themselves to a support of Mr. Grattan in this instance; and many of that body would have joined him, not from the slightest regard to a declaration of right, or its movers, but from hatred to the administration, which they would have most gladly embarrassed, and indeed overthrown, if in their power. The British Ministers acted with candour and magnanimity. The remedy to our political grievances was given precisely in that mode which we had ourselves prescribed. Mr. Fox moved the repeal of the obnoxious statute of George the first, in the House of Commons. "Never did a British

Minister," said Mr. Grattan, " support such honourable claims with such constitutional arguments." Lord Shelburne moved a similar resolution, with great ability, in the House of Lords. The repeal was immediately adopted.—The joy of the nation was unbounded. Twenty thousand seamen were voted for his Majesty's navy; and the volunteers cheerfully engaged to contribute their aid towards raising them. Fifty thousand pounds were unanimously voted to Mr. Grattan, and a day of general thanksgiving was appointed, to return thanks to Almighty God for that union, harmony, and cordial affection, which had been happily brought about between the two kingdoms.

But the brightness of our political days did not long continue. The clouds began to gather. It is necessary here to go a short way back. Two or three gentlemen, at the head of whom was Mr. Flood, who, before the address was moved, had been not only asked, but solicited to give their opinion as to any omission, or addition if necessary, and then made no objection, now declared, that nothing was done, and that any measure, short of an entire renunciation, on the part of England, to bind this country by English laws, would be

invalid and inefficient. The House of Commons, however, notwithstanding Mr. Flood's able arguments, thought otherwise, and were, almost unanimously, content with the repeal. So seemed the people to be in general, and numerous bodies of volunteers, most of Ulster particularly, declared themselves of a similar opinion. Legal security was strongly urged by the discontented; but the idea of one kingdom binding another, as by bond and warrant, was laughed at; and it was urged that, if England, after formally repealing a statute, which solemnly declared her right to make laws for this country, determined to resume that right, a renunciation would stand as little in the way of such perfidious hostility, as any other declaration whatever. If the faith of kindred nations was not to be relied on, what else was to be resorted to? Open war could alone terminate such conflicting pretensions. Nor could Ireland expect that England would so far prostrate itself, as in a subdued and grovelling tone to declare itself an usurper. Redress between individuals was never considered as less effectually obtained, because obtained in a gentlemanlike manner, and without urging too far that just pride, the concomitant of all honourable minds, which, when so urged, may very naturally, but very fatally, spurn at all concession or compromise whatever.

"The nation," to make use of Mr. Grattan's words, "that insists on the humiliation of another, is a foolish nation." Dissatisfaction was nevertheless gaining ground, nor were any arts wanting to disseminate it. On the 31st of July, the Volunteers at Belfast declared, by a majority of two voices, that "the nation should *not* be satisfied with what had been done."

There are moments in the history of nations when the most active talents will be outstripped by what is familiarly called wrong-headedness, in the race of mischief. A nobleman, Lord Abingdon, whose character was little known in Ireland, candid and honest certainly, but of a peculiar frame of mind, thought proper to introduce a bill, precisely at this time, asserting the right of Great Britain to legislate externally for Ireland. His position was, as expressly stated in the words of the bill, "that the Kings of England having been acknowledged sovereigns of the English seas for eighteen centuries, and the Western sea, in which Ireland is included, being part of the maritime power of the kings of England, the British Parliament had the sole right to make laws to regulate the external commerce of Great Britain, and all such kingdoms as are under its sovereignty." Another clause of the

bill then states, "That Queen Elizabeth having formerly forbad the King of France to build more ships than he *then* had, without her leave first obtained; it is enacted, that no kingdom as above stated, Ireland as well as others, should presume to build a navy, or any ships of war, without leave from the Lord High Admiral of England." Such was this bill. At any other time it would have excited little attention, unless from its singularity; but running rapidly as it did, against the fond and justly-cherished opinions of many who were as precipitant as its mover, the collision was formidable, and resounded from one end of the island to the other. Such was its potency, as not only to infuse strange doubts into the minds of numbers of the volunteer army, but "so horribly to shake the disposition" of various corps, that it frightened them from proceeding any further in their laudable exertions to procure men for the British navy. Among others, a respectable corps in Dublin, which was under Lord Charlemont's immediate command, entered into very warm resolutions against enrolling any seamen, and sent the resolutions to his Lordship, (he was then in the north,) accompanied by a letter of great civility and kindness. Lord Charlemont answered it directly, and preserved a copy of that and another letter, merely, as he said, "with

a view of shewing the difficulties he sometimes met in conducting the volunteers, and the toilsome means he was compelled to pursue, in regulating the sallies of a set of men, brave and honest, but, as must naturally be expected, rash and violent; whose virtuous zeal, easily inflamed by the machinations of the designing, it was often necessary to repress, though by no means to suppress." This was also to be done without endangering that good opinion, on which alone were founded his hopes of being able to serve his country, by securing its tranquillity. These letters he selected from among many which he was forced to write upon various occasions. The following was addressed to the secretary of the corps above-mentioned.

"SIR,

"However I may disapprove of the resolutions which you sent me inclosed, I cannot but thank the gentlemen of the corps for their kind conduct with regard to me; and you, for the politeness of your letter. Your wish to apply to me for my approbation, was all the compliment I had any right to expect, and, in my unlucky absence, an application to our Lieutenant Colonel, was right and proper. It happens however unfortunately, that in this instance, my sentiments and those of Colonel Flood, which have

usually been similar, essentially differ, and I trust that, had I been in town, I should have been able to have urged such arguments as would have prevented a proceeding, which, coming from a corps that I have the honour to command, has, I confess, given me much uneasiness. In the perpetual hurry of my present occupations, it is impossible for me to detail upon paper, the many reasons which, in my opinion, ought to have induced you at least to suspend your resolution. I shall therefore content myself for the present with saying, that this country would indeed be in a condition miserably precarious and humiliating, if every rash expression which may fall from any imprudent individual, should be able to change our sentiments, shake our determinations, and, by exciting our jealousies, to disturb the national confidence and tranquillity. Is it reasonable to expect, or possible to suppose, that the whole people of Great Britain should, in any sentiment whatever, be perfectly unanimous; or that, in a populous nation, there should not arise some unreasonable individuals who will give vent to their passions, and make use of their privilege of speaking, to declare their crude ideas in contradiction to the generally received opinions and resolves? And shall we suffer ourselves to be agitated by their wild sug-

gestions? Shall a people, such as we have shown ourselves, forfeit our character of steadiness, and veer at the slight impulse of every breath of discontent? but it will be said, that the speech of Lord Abingdon ought to be replied to, and so it was in the most proper and explicit manner. As no motion whatsoever was mad e no debate could arise, but the Chancellor asked Lord Abingdon if he intended to make any motion? For that if he did, such motion would be opposed. In consequence of this, Lord Abingdon pocketed his bill, and it does not even lie upon the table. Such is the transaction which has given you so much disquiet! Such is the transaction which has agitated the minds of men, upon whom a great nation relies for support. Such is the transaction which has induced you to disclaim proceeding in a service to which the nation is pledged both by honour and interest. A service, essentially necessary to yourselves, as the only intent of the present levy is, to man the Channel Fleet for the defence of your own coast, as well as that of Great Britain, and to enable us to cope with our inveterate enemies in those seas, where their decided superiority must necessarily end in invasion. But I did not mean to say so much, and have not now leisure to write more. Indeed,

even what I have written has been injured by frequent interruptions. I shall only add, that from my heart I disclaim with you all distinction between external and internal legislation, and shall at all times equally oppose, by every possible means, every attempt which may be made to legislate for us, either externally or internally. But I will not madly suppose any such attempt, and till it shall be made, which I trust will never be the case, I will remain in perfect tranquillity, do my utmost to promote the security and welfare, both of Ireland and the empire at large, strengthen this country and her constitution with all my efforts, and quietly rest upon my arms.

" From what I have now said, you will readily conceive how uneasy your resolution has made me, and how happy I should be, that a service which I am here endeavoring to forward should equally succeed every where, and more especially in a corps, which I have the honour of peculiarly calling my own; the credit of which is, in my opinion, in this instance, essentially concerned, and which I am bound to love by every motive of gratitude and esteem.

" I am, Sir,

" Your most obedient, humble servant,

" CHARLEMONT."

Lord Charlemont frequently said, that this corps, though highly respectable, was peculiarly open to the suggestions of busy agitators, and for some time gave him far more trouble, and tormented him more, in consequence of those agitators, than any other corps in the city of Dublin. "In truth," his Lordship used to add, "I may say, that the whole volunteer army could not be put in competition with them in this respect. However, such was their indulgent opinion of me, and such the influence which that opinion gave me over them, that they gradually became as ductile, and free from all rash resolves, as I could possibly wish."

The second letter alluded to, a copy of which was taken by Lord Charlemont, is here partly given. His Lordship's correspondent was a very respectable gentleman in the north. After briefly stating the usual arguments which induced him to support the measure of a simple repeal of the act of George the First, the noble writer proceeds: "For my own particular, I confess myself convinced, and the more so when I reflect, that the contrary doctrine has *generally* been preached by those who wish to spread through the kingdom their own private discontents. I say *generally*, for as to Flood, he is my friend, and though

I cannot approve his present conduct, I would not wish to insinuate any thing to his prejudice. *This* I know, that, under the sanction of his authority, numbers have enlisted themselves who wish to undermine the present administration, merely because it has set out on a system of governing without corruption; who declare such a plan imaginary and Utopian, and who, having at all times uniformly withstood the just wishes of the people, are now desirous, for their own ends, to inspire them with causeless jealousies, who, having passed their whole parliamentary lives in the pay and service of the court, now take upon them the very new character of flaming patriots, in order to force administration back into the old trade of corruption, by which means they may be gainers; favourers of the late ministry, and of their principles, they wish to make the country so uneasy, as that the present men may be compelled either to have recourse to those measures, under which this kingdom has so long groaned, or to retire; enemies to retrenchment, which is now thought to be the favourite plan, they wish to render any such measure impossible, by shewing government that they must *purchase*, and consequently keep entire, the fund of corruption. Some few there may possibly be, who act from mistaken principle, but of this I am sure, that

by far the greater number answer exactly the description I have now given. Such are my opinions on the present important crisis, yet am I not however arrogant enough to hope that they should have more weight than must naturally be allowed to the sentiments of a man who has ever been warm in his country's cause, and who is unprejudiced and uninfluenced.—Office I have disclaimed, and as for honours, my kind and partial country has heaped upon me greater and more substantial than any monarch on earth could bestow. But it may be said that they are not hereditary. I answer they are. My son, and my son's son, will enjoy their consequences, and I trust, that as the corruption by which many honours are obtained, descends from generation to generation, so may those principles by which, through the goodness of my countrymen, mine have been gained, be entailed upon my family, the best and most precious of all inheritances. Farewell;—my affectionate compliments to all friends, and particularly to C—ford.

"I remain, my dear Sir,

"Your most faithful,

"and obliged humble servant,

"CHARLEMONT."

Whatever relaxation there was in the efforts of some of the volunteer corps to continue the recruiting service for the navy, there was none on the part of Lord Charlemont. Under his auspices numbers of the Ulster army, which at this time elected him commander in chief of all the forces in the north, were peculiarly active in the same laudable work. A most respectable meeting was held in the city of Dublin, at the Tholsel, when Lord Charlemont was called to the chair, and requested to write to the different sheriffs in every part of Ireland, strongly recommending this great national service. He did so, and from all quarters received the most cordial and satisfactory answers. Soon after the repeal of the statute of George the First, so often mentioned during this period of Irish history, had received the royal assent, Lord Charlemont wrote to his friend the Marquis of Rockingham. The letter strongly marks his feelings at the completion of this wise and necessary measure. It produced a temporary correspondence between him, Lord Rockingham, and Mr. Burke.

"My Dearest Lord,

"In this season of national joy, this scene of universal congratulation, is it possible that I should be silent? It would be improper, and,

thank Heaven, my feelings render it impossible also. I, who in addition to the public cause, at which every Irishman rejoices, feel in my private capacity every tender motive of heart-felt satisfaction. Who have not only to exult in the liberty of my country, but have also the delight of knowing that the man who has long been dear to my heart, has had so large a share in promoting the restoration of that liberty. Suffer me then, my ever dear Lord, to join felicitations to my acknowledgements, and to congratulate you upon the situation in which you now stand; a situation which, to one who feels like you, must be happy beyond expression, conscious, as you must be, that you have been a principal cause of the felicity of a whole nation, and that principally through your means the union of the empire is secured by the bonds of mutual freedom and consequent affection. Permit me also, on a more private score, to thank you for having reconciled my duty to my inclination, by enabling me to devote my endeavours to the support of an administration, any opposition to which would have made me miserable, and which, from the earnest already given us, there is every reason to be confident will claim, as their due, the hearty support of every sincere lover of his country.

"The last letter which I had the honour of writing to your Lordship, contained a faithful statement of the situation of this kingdom, and my ardent solicitations in its behalf. All that I could desire has been perfectly complied with, and consequently, this should be a letter purely of acknowledgment, for I cannot avoid indulging my vanity, however perhaps ill founded, so far as to suppose that even the opinion of a simple individual, upon whose fidelity you could depend, might possibly have had some little weight with you. Impressed by this imagination, however vain and idle it may be, how can I express the acknowledgments of my heart? But the attempt would be fruitless, and my vain endeavours would detain you too long. I shall therefore hasten to conclude, by assuring you, of what I trust you do not doubt, that,

"I have the honour to be,
"my dearest Lord, &c.
"CHARLEMONT.

"P. S. Allow me to request that you would present my most affectionate compliments to my old friend Burke."

"DEAR LORD CHARLEMONT,

"The state of my health continues but mode-

rate. The influenza attacking me, while I was only recovering from old complaints, rendered me little capable of much active labour, and yet sometimes I contrive to get though a good deal of business, though in some matters I must run in arrear. I thank your Lordship for your last kind and cordial letter. I rejoice that your Lordship is pleased and satisfied with our conduct as ministers, and be assured, my dear Lord, that those persons whom formerly you honoured with your friendship, as individuals, (because you approved their principles,) will continue to act towards Ireland, and towards promoting the general good of the empire, with the same zeal, and liberal ideas, which have hitherto characterized their conduct. There are matters which may want adjustment in the new state in which England and Ireland now stand. I heartly wish that no time was lost on either side in accelerating the adjustment of any such matters which might hereafter cause any disputes or misunderstandings, and this happy moment of friendship and cordiality, and confidence, between the countries, was made use of, to form and arrange plans of mutual and reciprocal support. Nothing was ever better timed than the kind offer made by Ireland of furnishing 20,000 men for the service of the fleet. Lord Keppel has sent

one of the best, and most alert men in the navy, to superintend, and to receive the men, which the zeal of Ireland will furnish. Captain Mac Bride has no occasion for my panegyric, but in writing to a friend like your Lordship, it is natural for me to say something in behalf of one I have a great regard for, and who probably, in this business, may have frequent intercourse with your Lordship.—Lord Keppel assures me, that if he had a supply of seamen, he could add, in three weeks, not less than 14 ships of the line to the fleet which Lord Howe will command. It will indeed, at present, be but a very scanty fleet with which Lord Howe will proceed to sea. I verily believe, if France and Spain are alert, their fleet may be more than double the number of our's. But could we be enabled to send the ten, or fourteen additional ships, along with, or soon to join Lord Howe, I should have the utmost reliance that the ability, and conduct of Lord Howe, would afford us the most pleasing prospect of success, even though the enemies fleet might still be superior to our's in actual number of line of battle ships. Nothing but the friendly efforts of Ireland can rapidly furnish men for these ships.

"I take the opportunity of writing to your

Lordship by the messenger whom I send to the Duke of Portland, to convey to his Grace, in a safe and expeditious manner, his majesty's gracious confirmation, and approbation, of the resolution of the House of Commons of Ireland, in granting £50,000 to be laid out in the purchase of lands for Mr. Grattan. As soon as I received at the treasury, the communication from the Duke of Portland, I directed the warrant to be prepared, and took the earliest opportunity of laying it before his Majesty for his signature. The proceedings in Ireland are upon a large and liberal scale, and though economy may be a necessary virtue in a state, yet, in rewarding great public merit, narrow ideas on that subject are not good policy.—I have many compliments to make to your Lordship from Lady Rockingham. She is happy that so much good humour is likely now to subsist between England and Ireland, and the more so, as she thinks that national and private friendship going hand in hand, must be pleasing to your Lordship, as well as to myself.

"I have the honour to be,

"My dear Lord, &c. &c.

"ROCKINGHAM.

"Grosvenor Square, Monday, June 17, 1782."

Lord Charlemont was much affected at receiv-

ing this kind letter. The Marquis was so ill when he wrote it, that he could scarcely attend to any business. The answer was as follows.

"My Dearest Lord,

"The satisfaction which your letters always afford me has been, in this last instance, not a little allayed by the accounts you give me of the present weak state of your health, a point in which, at all times, my affection for you must highly interest me, but in which I am now more peculiarly concerned, not only as a friend, but as a lover of my country. Yet am I encouraged to hope the best, when I reflect that Providence, which seems now at length to have interposed in behalf of this declining Empire, will restore the health, and protect that life, with which its safety and prosperity are so intimately connected.

"Your lordship will have heard, from the Duke of Portland, the result of the great meeting at Dungannon. All has gone well, in spite of the amazing activity of those who wish to propagate through the nation their own discontents. The address to the king has been sent over by delegates from the meeting. Upon this matter I have had a long conference with the Lord

Lieutenant, and his grace has, I believe, written to your lordship.—He mentioned to me, that though etiquette must preclude his majesty from giving an answer to the address, your lordship would probably invite the gentlemen to dinner on the day of the delivery, and take an opportunity of giving them such an answer as might be satisfactory. This measure I take the liberty humbly to recommend to your lordship as salutary and necessary.

" The important business of the seamen will, I trust, succeed to our wishes. No efforts of mine have been wanting, and you may be assured I shall continue my exertions. Nothing can possibly impede the service, but this unlucky discontent, which some have endeavoured to spread abroad, respecting the repeal of the sixth of George the first, being unaccompanied by any renunciation clause, or preamble.

" Your lordship however will have seen the resolution of Dungannon respecting the seamen. With 20,000 men thus pledged to assist in recruiting, I think we cannot fail, even though the ardour of some among them may be slackened by the cause above mentioned; a cause which I have endeavoured, and shall labour by every

means in my power, to remove, even though my popularity were to be hazarded by such attempt. For, however dearly I may hold the love of the people, if a constant perseverance in the service of my country cannot retain it, I should account it neither honourable nor satisfactory. The paragraph in your lordship's letter, where you mention, that, in the new state in which England and Ireland now stand, there are matters which may want adjustment, I do not entirely comprehend. That all future disputes, or misunderstandings, should be obviated, is undoubtedly a principle of which no man can disapprove; but till your lordship shall be pleased particularly to specify the means, by which this great object may be attained, it is impossible for me to form any judgment, or to give any opinion. I am extremely obliged to your lordship for your kind alacrity in carrying into execution the vote of the House of Commons in behalf of my friend Grattan. No man has ever merited more from his country than he has done; and his present conduct, in labouring with me to check the ill effects, which, without our united efforts, might have been produced by the exertions of the discontented, is, in my opinion, a continuation of his merits. Lady Charlemont desires her sin-

cerest good wishes, and compliments, to your lordship, and joins with me in best respects to Lady Rockingham. Be so good as to assure her ladyship, on my behalf, that if in the present instance, national and private friendships go hand in hand, as I trust they will, such amity must be sincere indeed, perfect, and perpetual.

" I have the honour to be,
" my dearest Lord,
" Your Lordship's most faithful,
" Most truly affectionate, and obedient servant,
" CHARLEMONT.

" Dublin, June, 1782."

The delegates, alluded to in the above letter, waited on his Majesty with a very dutiful, and proper address, expressive of the loyalty, gratitude, and satisfaction, of the Ulster volunteers. But it is impossible to read the following note of Lord Charlemont's, which is annexed to his letter, without being almost equally disgusted with the persons who laboured so successfully in the cause of discontent and sedition, and those who with such stupid alacrity became their willing dupes. " Before the arrival of the volunteers' embassy, Lord Rockingham was seized with that disorder which, in the end, proved so fatal to him, to me, and the empire. My letter had

however the desired effect, the delegates having been received, and treated by his Majesty's ministers with every mark of attention; in consequence of which they returned home perfectly well satisfied, and helped in some degree to assuage their growing discontents. Yet, so successful had the efforts been of those who wished to inflame, that even those popular messengers were on their return unpopular, and were treated with disesteem by the more violent of the party."

The paragraph in Lord Rockingham's letter, touching some adjustment as necessary between England and Ireland in their novel situation, Lord Charlemont considered as probably alluding to some arrangement relative to commerce. It certainly created some degree of uneasiness in his mind. But whatever was intended, nothing appears to have been done. At least, nothing to which Lord Charlemont was, in any respect, a party. Mr. Burke's letter to him was as follows:

"My Dear Lord,

"The slight mark of your Lordship's remembrance of an old friend, in the end of your Lordship's letter to Lord Rockingham, gave me very great satisfaction. It was always an object

of my ambition to stand well with you. I ever esteemed and admired your public and private virtues, which have at length produced all the effects which virtue can produce on this side of the grave, in the universal love of your countrymen. I assure you, my Lord, that I take a sincere part in the general joy, and hope that mutual affection will do more for mutual help, and mutual advantage, between the two kingdoms, than any ties of artificial connexion whatsoever. If I were not persuaded of this, my satisfaction at the late events would not be so complete as it is. For, born as I was in Ireland, and having received what is equal to the origin of one's being, the improvement of it there, and therefore full of love, and I might say, of fond partiality for Ireland, I should think any benefit to her, which should be bought with the real disadvantage of this kingdom, or which might tend to loosen the ties of connection between them, would be, even to our native country, a blessing of a very equivocal kind. But I am convinced, that no reluctant tie can be a strong one, and that a natural, cheerful alliance will be a far securer link of connexion than any principle of subordination borne with grudgings and discontent. All these contrivances are for the happiness of those they concern, and if

they do not effect this, they do nothing, or worse than nothing. Go on, and prosper; improve the liberty you have obtained by your virtue, as a means of national prosperity, and internal as well as external union. I find that Ireland, among other marks of her just gratitude to Mr. Grattan, (on which your Lordship will present him my congratulations,) intends to erect a monument to his honour, which is to be decorated with sculpture. It will be a pleasure to you to know, that at this time, a young man of Ireland is here, who, I really think, as far as my judgment goes, is fully equal to our best statuaries, both in taste and execution. If you employ him, you will encourage the rising arts in the decoration of the rising virtue of Ireland; and though the former, in the scale of things, is infinitely below the latter, there is a kind of relationship between them. I am sure there has been ever a close connection between them in your mind. The young man's name, who wishes to be employed, is Hickey.

"I have the honour to be,

"With the highest sentiments of regard and esteem,

"my dear Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

"EDM. BURKE.

"Whitehall, June 12th, 1782."

The monument which Mr. Burke mentions was never erected. Popular discontent, popular inconstancy, and the machinations of ill-doers, forbad it. On the first of July following, the Marquis of Rockingham died, and his death was followed by a complete division of the cabinet. The labour, perseverance, and union of years, were, by the extinction of one illustrious and good man, rendered inefficient. The affliction of Lord Charlemont may be well conceived. "Of this virtuous, accomplished, and truly amiable man," (thus his Lordship speaks of his departed friend,) "whatever friendship might inspire me to say, would fall far below, not only my own feelings, but the love, gratitude, and respect of every good citizen, of every good man throughout the British dominions.

"Cui pudor, et justitiæ soror,
Incorrupta fides, nudaque veritas,
Quando ullum invenient parem?"

I shall have occasion hereafter to mention Lord Rockingham. He must be lamented by all who wish well to the tranquillity and welfare of their country, for, from the hour of his death may be dated that fatal disunion between some of our eminent men, especially Mr. Pitt and

Mr. Fox, which, however they differed essentially and widely as to some political questions, was extended and kept alive by every art of low cunning, ministerial intrigue, and the bad passions of inferior men, labouring merely for their own despicable aggrandizement or emolument. It has been productive of much national calamity.

In the general contemplation of politics there is surely something extremely disgusting. When we know, and perfectly understand, the motives of many who act in a higher political sphere, every honest feeling shrinks back from the ingratitude, perfidy, and inordinate selfishness, which so often crowded on our attention. Yet, the person who is the object of the greatest popular odium, the Minister himself, is frequently not at all tinctured by any one of those bad qualities; certainly infinitely less so in general, than the humblest of his followers. Don Quixote and Sancho form no imperfect representation of such a personage, and some of his adherents. The latter acting solely from the impulse of vulgar and sordid minds, suggest only such expedients as, whatever may be their utility, or the contrary, will invariably comprehend and benefit themselves. But the whole is varnished over

with the adroitness of slaves, which a noble and exalted nature is incapable of attending to, or exactly perceiving the drift of, even if it did. Perhaps it will be found, that the largest share of that unpopularity which so often attends ministers, arises from the mischievous activity, or inconsiderately-adopted suggestions of subordinate, or unsuspected instruments. The people exclaim, and are discontented. With great reason often. But when to please them the Minister retires, or their own dominion blazes forth; in the success of their most favoured measures, how do they act themselves? Not always indeed, but surely too, too often, with such boisterous caprice, imperious levity, and vehement ingratitude, that, not merely those whose feelings are quicker than their discrimination, but persons of very unclouded intellect, almost half wish even for the most unpopular Minister's resumption of power. A Minister is frequently imposed on, but the people are much oftener so, when it suits the purposes of unprincipled, able men, to practice on their credulity. I speak of the multitude. Altogether, on whatever side we turn our eyes, politics never did yet, and perhaps of all human pursuits, never will afford any permanent, unmixed satisfaction to any rational being. But this reflection will not justify inert-

ness, or indifference to the service of our country. The contemplation of the unworthiness of others should not force us to a dereliction of our best duties. In all ages it has forced too many.

The conduct of numbers of my countrymen, amiable and excellent as they generally are, was at this time utterly unjustifiable. A mere difference of opinion, on a point inconsequential, and even now almost forgotten, made them regard their best friends almost as monsters. All Grattan's services were thrown into oblivion. The favourite of the 16th of April, became in little more than two months, indeed long before "their shoes were old," in following him with loud acclamations, one of the most unpopular men in the kingdom. The man of firm temper may laugh at all this, but it cannot render solitude, or total absence from the political world, less supportable, to reflect, that the persons who contributed most to this frenzy, were the very men who, for year after year, swelled every unpropitious vote against Ireland; and whose doors, barricadoed as if against the plague, could scarcely afford them security, against the hatred, and almost legitimate fury of the people, who now applauded all that they said, and

all that they did. Such are the extremes in a free state; extremes, to which liberty is nearly allied. By those who are better courtiers than public men, the consanguinity may be denied; but it does not less exist. It will be acknowledged by every candid, reflecting mind, and, on the whole, God forbid that, because we are sometimes fools, we should be always slaves.

If the following letter from Lord Charlemont to his friend, Dr. Haliday, justly condemns the sinister zeal of some, and vile levity of others, it places the conduct of him, who was now the object of so much calumny, in a very favourable point of view.

"Dublin, August 11th, 1782.

"—— Respecting the grant, I know with certainty that Grattan, though he felt himself flattered by the *intention*, looked upon the act with the deepest concern, and did all in his power to deprecate it. As it was found impossible to defeat the design, all his friends, and I among others, were employed to lessen the sum. It was accordingly decreased by one half, and that principally by his positive declaration through us, that, if the whole were insisted on, he would refuse all, but a few hundreds, which he would retain as an

honourable mark of the goodness of his country. By some, who look only into themselves for information concerning human nature, this conduct will probably be construed into hypocricy. To such, the excellence and pre-eminency of virtue, and the character of Grattan, are as invisible and incomprehensible, as the brightness of the sun to a man born blind.—I forgot to mention, in regard to the second scandalous aspersion, that Fitzpatrick never in any way, either express or implied, threw out any such threat as that which has been forged for him. Such an idea, I am confident, never occurred to him; and, if it had, he has too much sense to have hazarded it, as the consequence must have been fatal to his administration. Indeed, these instances of ingratitude shock me not a little: That a man who has given up his whole life to the service of his country, nay, has imminently hazarded that life, by his activity in the cause; whose endeavours have been crowned with success, to whom principally we owe the blessing of liberty: That such a man should be maliciously defamed, and the scandal believed by many, is a baseness of ingratitude that surpasses all comprehension. Happy it is, that virtue in herself is a blessing, and that a good concience is the greatest of all pleasures, as the contrary is a curse, and a punish-

ment, more excruciating than any tyrant ever could invent. The former of these will, at all events, be my friend's reward; and the latter, if they be not callous, will well avenge him of all his enemies. For my own part, I have as yet been spared; but, let what will happen, nothing shall make me deviate from the path I have hitherto pursued. Detraction may possibly injure my reputation, though, even there I think I may defy it; but it never shall take from me that first of all blessings, the consciousness that I am acting right, and to the utmost of my abilities exerting myself in the service of my country. This may look like vanity, but a proper pride in some cases is a necessary, and even a virtuous quality."—The same subject is pursued in another letter to Haliday, written in some days after the preceding one.

"Marino, August 17th, 1782.

"——I have had a letter from our friend Harry,* dated Shrewsbury. He was then getting better, and writes in tolerable spirits. I am heartily glad that he is safe out of this pestilen-

* Henry Grattan. He had then set out on his journey to Spa.

tial atmosphere, and am certain, that the change of air, and of scene, will do him more good even than the waters of Spa. To a delicate mind, popular ingratitude must be grating indeed. But what people were more apt to be ungrateful than the renowned Athenians? Why then should I not flatter myself that, together with this bad quality of theirs, we may also have obtained some of their good ones,—their spirit of freedom as well as their spirit of discontent? If we have gotten their levity, may it not be a certain symptom, that we are in full possession of their liberty also? You see that I am inclined to be in good humour with the world; a certain sign, that tranquillity and the shades of Marino agree with me. Why, my dearest Doctor, may I not hope sometime or other to shew this, my favourite retreat, to you and Mrs. Haliday?"

The ministry had been now almost totally changed as to its principal members. Lord Shelburne was at the head of the Treasury, and the Duke of Portland, though he had resigned the Lieutenancy of Ireland, continued here, chiefly, I believe, from the effects of a fall from his horse, till the middle of September. It should be mentioned, that the Catholic bill, which had been introduced, and almost passed in Lord Carlisle's

time, received the royal assent when his Grace of Portland closed the session. It granted to the Catholics still further immunities. For this bill Lord Charlemont voted.

Towards the end of this summer a most singular military scheme took place in Ireland; a scheme, at any other period, and before the militia was established, not ineligible; and no mean substitute for such troops as the country might, at particular junctures, be deprived of. In consequence of the war, and a recent vote of the House of Commons, which had been followed by an Act of Parliament, five thousand men were granted for service abroad. The military establishment, as fixed in Lord Townshend's Viceroyalty, consisted of twelve thousand men; but, as four thousand were voted for a prosecution of hostilities not long after their commencement, there now remained but three thousand for the entire defence of the kingdom. Altogether, there were not, allowing for the deficiencies of regiments, and common casualties, regulars sufficient to do garrison duty. This the authors of the scheme, positively, and perhaps very justly, asserted. It was proposed to raise four provincial regiments, of one thousand men each, for three years, or for the war; to be officered by Irish gentlemen, who

were to receive rank according to the number of men that they raised, and not to be sent out of Ireland. This scheme was submitted to Lord Charlemont's consideration, and it was suggested at the same time, that he might command the whole, or part of it, as he pleased, with the rank of Major-General. They were to be called Fencibles. To the command of this body of men, Lord Charlemont gave, in the first instance, a decided negative ; and at a subsequent interview with the Lord Lieutenant, stated some of his objections to the entire plan : That from his peculiar situation, he well knew, that nothing would be more unpopular ; if however, on repeated consideration, it appeared eligible, the mere unpopularity of the measure should not sway him, or any honest man. The Volunteers would undoubtedly regard it, not as an oblique, but very direct effort, to undermine them : And considering their alacrity and eagerness to meet the common foe, why not call on them again, if it was necessary ? That, if from such an army, some danger was apprehended, that danger would not be diminished by depriving them of officers of experience and moderation, who had acquired an undoubted influence over them, and by that influence controlled many occasional irregularities. Who would then command them ?

Assuredly they would not disband themselves? and the most unprincipled, dangerous men in the kingdom might, in an evil hour, become their leaders. That if young officers were to be taken from the volunteer army, neither they nor the men could be of much use, as, in all probability, the war would be over before either soldier or subaltern were disciplined. For any present purpose, therefore, they would be inefficient, and any distant purpose could hardly be brought into contemplation. Lord Charlemont added, that he imagined his predictions respecting the almost general odium attendant on the plan, would be found not the less true, because the Lord Lieutenant might have many applications for commissions; he would, undoubtedly, have many, and when rank and money were to be had, he knew not that country, especially one circumstanced as Ireland was, where similar applications would not be abundant. Such were, in part, Lord Charlemont's objections; but it seems they were not regarded as of sufficient weight to occasion an immediate extinction of the plan, for, whilst reviewing the southern army at Cork, he heard that it had been carried into execution, and all the officers taken from the Volunteers. That body became outrageous,

and the people sympathizing with them, the general indignation overflowed all bounds.

This took place in the summer of 1782, as I have stated, but so fixed was the popular abhorrence of the Fencible scheme, that on the dissolution of parliament, in the ensuing year, some members lost their seats, in consequence of accepting fencible commissions. A circumstance occurred, which it is the duty of an historian to mention. When Lord Charlemont again waited on the Lord Lieutenant, he lamented that he was so good a prophet, for the Fencibles had created more disturbance than he had even ventured to foretel; but begged leave, at the same time, to ask the Duke, if his prediction was not equally outstripped in the number of applications which had been received? "Certainly," replied his Grace; "I have had, at the least, a hundred and fifty applications; and some persons, whom I was obliged to refuse, have been the most outrageously abusive of the Fencibles, and decried the plan infinitely more than its original enemies. The Volunteers are all content and mildness compared to them." Many retired, well meaning people may perhaps imagine, that such conduct can scarcely be met with. But it is a faithful, not overcharged picture of popular impos-

tors. Such base auxiliaries, however, were not necessary to overthrow the fencible scheme. The united efforts of volunteers, and the people, with a clearer prospect perhaps of returning peace, utterly demolished it. At all events, nothing could have reconciled the country to its adoption. Lord Charlemont acted the part of a dutiful citizen throughout the whole of the business; honestly and unaffectedly he advised government, and did not inflame the people against it. Although he foresaw the consequences, and was not better received at the castle for stating them so explicitly as he did, his respect for the Duke continued undiminished. He applauded his general conduct, his courteous deportment, (so particularly necessary in a Lord Lieutenant,) and was to the utmost gratified by his behaviour towards the Volunteers. As Lord Charlemont said, he made them fashionable at court. This his Lordship considered as flowing from the Duke's natural disposition, unassailed, in the more early part of his administration, by any fencible plans. When the volunteers were reviewed by Lord Charlemont in the Phœnix Park, the Duke was present; and on being thanked by the noble general at the levee, for the honour his grace had done them, "Surely, my lord," he replied, "a body of men, formed on

such principles, could not be so near me, without a desire on my part to see their exertions." This was spoken so audibly, that numbers heard it, and were captivated. The same attention prevailed every where. The late amiable, and much lamented General Burgoyne had, at that time, the command of the forces in Ireland. Whenever the king's troops, and the volunteer corps met, a mutual exchange of the usual military courtesies constantly took place between them. Lord Charlemont suggested, that both should be drawn out together, and pay the accustomed honours to the King's birth day, in conjunction. The suggestion was laudably, and generously complied with; and whoever remembers it, must acknowledge, that it appeared to be a day of the most unaffected, real gladness, that perhaps ever shone forth in Dublin. Why are not such moments laid hold on, and improved, as they ought to be? Every attention was paid by the military to Lord Charlemont, and, in all places, the reverence, and affection almost, of all the soldiery, kept equal pace with their obedience to the commands of their superiors. On his road to Limerick, he passed through the town of Nenagh. There happened to be no volunteers in the place, and a party of the 18th light dragoons insisted on mounting a guard for him, whilst he staid the evening.

Another party of the same regiment, with equal cheerfulness and politeness, escorted him for a short distance, that is, as far as he would permit them. Such are the benign effects of an administration, founded on the unmixed confidence of the people. Such the cordial good-will, which at that moment reigned between the regulars and the volunteers. No rudeness, no jealousy, no umbrage. Distinctions are, too often, as invidiously as sedulously kept up between the soldier and the citizen. Let them not be taught any other, than those which arise naturally from varied society, in the day of peace, and they themselves will make none in the day of battle. What has occasioned the downfall of many of the ancient monarchies of Europe? Not Gallic superiority surely! Too much reliance on one class of the community, which, however brave, could not alone sustain such monarchies, and, as the event proved, a morbid oblivion of their citizens and their peasantry. It is proper to state here, that Lord Charlemont totally declined the acceptance of any office, or emolument, though repeatedly solicited by the Duke of Portland to take both. Mr. Grattan, on his Grace's arrival, and before the grant of fifty thousand pounds was even suggested, displayed a similar disinterestedness.

The Earl Temple* assumed the government of Ireland, September, 1782. He had, before he was formally declared Lord Lieutenant in council, written a most polite, and, in every respect, satisfactory letter to Lord Charlemont, announcing his appointment, and soliciting that nobleman's support, during his administration in Ireland. Lord Charlemont's answer was, in part, as follows:

(No Date.)

"My Lord,

"Permit me to return you my most sincere acknowledgments for the honour conferred on me, and the pleasure afforded me by your lordship's letter, which I should have long since answered, had not my receiving it been retarded by my being in the country, where I was busily occupied in reviewing the volunteer army. With your lordship, I most sincerely lament the resolution which the Duke of Portland has taken to resign the government of Ireland, in the administration of which high office he had, as you well observe, obtained the almost universal confidence of this nation, a confidence founded upon the

* Now Marquis of Buckingham.

surest basis, our perfect conviction of his public virtue, and our experience of his steady endeavours, essentially to serve the country he was deputed to govern. He is indeed a man in every respect fitted worthy and usefully to fill the office which has been assigned to him. Your lordship will, I am sure, pardon me for dwelling a little on a topic, which is with me a favourite one, especially as his approaching loss renders him, if possible, still more dear. If any thing however could console us for such a loss, it would be the character of the noble person who is destined to succeed him; a consolation, which is greatly increased by the sentiments conveyed in your lordship's letter. With such a pledge of your sincerity, I cannot doubt, or fear; and shall only add, that as, notwithstanding my opinion of, and my good wishes for the Duke of Portland, his conduct was the only thing that insured to him my support; in the same manner, and on the same account only, will your lordship be certain to receive it. With every acknowledgment of your goodness towards me, and every good wish for the happiness of your future government,

"I have the honour to be,

"My Lord, &c. &c.

"CHARLEMONT."

The new Viceroy's letter to Lord Charlemont was fraught with the justest principles of government; and, as he expressed his desire to pursue a plan of reforming the expenditure, and correcting the abuses of the revenue of Ireland, he certainly did not deviate from it. His brother, now Lord Grenville, was his Secretary; and as the succeeding winter was the last, during which the Irish Parliament did not sit in those days, ample time was afforded to the Lord Lieutenant for a prosecution of those plans of retrenchment, and controul of that multiplied and grevious peculation in various offices, which he so laudably engaged in. Like his father, Mr. George Grenville, he took business as a pleasure he was to enjoy, and his "application was undissipated and unwearied."* Such assiduity was never before, and indeed I believe, never since witnessed at the Castle. Nor was he at this time more than thirty years of age. He was not awed either by situation or connexion. A gentleman of large fortune, allied to Lord Charlemont, and protected by a great Southern parliamentary leader, was dismissed from his office.

* See Mr. Burke's speeches on American taxation, and his character of Mr. Grenville.

He was found deficient in a very large sum, and his Majesty's attorney was ordered to sue him, on behalf of the public. Lord Shannon's patronage, though supported by more than half a dozen members of the House of Commons, was for the first time found inadequate. Never till then, had the old court known that seven-fold fence to fail, and dismal was the augury. The Viceroy was not inattentive to Lord Charlemont on this occasion. He stated the business to his lordship, and very civilly added, that he could not think of proceeding in it, without acquainting him. Lord Charlemont expressed much obligation, and, at the same time, entire approbation of the Lord Lieutenant's conduct. His Excellency was much gratified; he stated the egregious defalcations which had been brought to light in many offices, and, "be assured, my Lord," continued he, "there's not a board throughout Ireland which does not tremble at this instant." The dismay was terrible. Clerks, treasurers, and secretaries, fled in all quarters. Some chiefs of particular departments did not indeed fly, but menaced, or muttered eternal vengeance against Lord Temple; they shuddered to behold the ancient abodes of peculation on the point of being exposed to the eye of day, to mortals, and immortals, the Lower House, and

the Upper; abodes, odious from corruption, and formidable even to some of its ennobled professors in a higher sphere, as almost vieing with their own.*

But Lord Temple went on, and it is justly to be lamented, that his speedy recall should put an end to all further exposition.

About this time his Majesty was pleased to create an order of Knighthood for Ireland, by the appellation of Knights of St. Patrick. As this measure immediately followed the establishment of the independence of Ireland, it was extremely gratifying. The letter to Lord Charlemont from Earl Temple on this occasion, does so much honour to both, that every one, I think, will be pleased with its insertion.

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* Οικία δὲ θνητοῖσι, καὶ ἀθανάτοισι φανείη
Σμερδαλέ', εὐρώεντα, τά τε στυγέουσι θεοί περ!—
Ilia. Lib. 20. v. 64.

"My Lord,

"His Majesty having been pleased to institute a new order of knighthood in Ireland, as a measure calculated to convey to his Irish subjects the sense he entertains of the present respectable situation of that kingdom, and the peculiar interest which he takes in whatever regards them, I have received his commands to prepare, for his approbation, a list of such names as may best promote his Majesty's intentions of placing this order upon the most respectable footing. And I am convinced, that I cannot better promote this gracious disposition, than by addressing myself to your Lordship, whose birth, rank, and property would well entitle you to every mark of distinction. But when I add to these considerations your public services, so justly distinguished, and of a nature which this kingdom must ever most gratefully remember, I cannot hesitate a moment in requesting your Lordship's permission to place your name upon the list, which I am preparing in pursuance of his Majesty's commands. And I mention this idea to your Lordship, with the greater satisfaction, as the motto of this order, (Quis separabit,) will tend to enforce that explained, constitutional, and solid union, between the two kingdoms, so necessary to both, and which your Lordship

has so long laboured to establish upon the surest foundation,—that of mutual confidence and affection.

" I have the honour to be, with great regard,
" My Lord,
" Your Lordship's very faithful,
" And obedient servant,
" NUGENT TEMPLE."

Lord Charlemont, (and with much reason certainly,) was uncommonly pleased with this letter. He waited on the Lord Lieutenant, and, with many expressions of thanks, accepted the honour that was so kindly and justly proposed to him. It cannot be denied, however, that at a former interview, before any circumstance whatever relative to the order was absolutely determined, or the institution itself publicly announced, he seemed rather to decline it. Among other things which he stated to the Lord Lieutenant, he said, " that the measure seemed to him, and in his opinion really was, an honourable distinction to the kingdom, and might be considered as a badge and symbol of her independence, so newly created. The time also, most assuredly was, as had been mentioned by the Lord Lieutenant, peculiarly favourable; since, as such institutions usually took place in conse-

quence of some signal success, the present period would be allowed, of all others, the most proper, as no events could possibly be more worthy of consideration, than those which had lately happened. But there was another point of view, in which it might be regarded; would it not tend, (in some measure at least,) to extend the influence of the crown, so recently protested against? But to that objection, Lord Charlemont added, an answer might certainly be made, which, if it even occurred to the Lord Lieutenant, his politeness would of course prevent him from urging; namely, that as to the influences of the crown in the House of Lords, it could scarcely receive any addition, for what could make many, or most of his, Lord Charlemont's illustrious brethren, better courtiers than they were at that moment? He expressed at the same time great respect for the Lord Lieutenant, and that respect made him hesitate, as to the propriety of any refusal of the order, for, as he added, what time could be more auspicious, or what Viceroy better entitled to general esteem? Much more passed, but it is unnecessary to state any thing further, as he accepted the order. In truth, there could be no genuine obstacle to his acceptance of such an honour, and he frequently acknowledged that

Lord Temple acted through the whole of the business with equal urbanity and good sense.

Lord Charlemont had conceived it possible that at that moment, when the general agitation of the public mind had not subsided, the people, by whose confidence he considered himself as alone useful, might, through some misconception or misrepresentation, construe this acceptance of the blue ribband of St. Patrick, into a dereliction of their interests: but they and the Volunteers (in fact, at that time they were one,) exulted at his promotion, and universally declared, that they never could have pardoned a government, which, in such an institution, would have omitted him.

The following circular letter of Mr. Secretary Hamilton, is connected with the history of the order of St. Patrick, and that of Lord Charlemont at this particular juncture.

"Dublin Castle, 4th Feb. 1783.

"My Lord,

"The Lord Lieutenant has commanded me to acquaint your Lordship, that he has received, with very particular satisfaction, a letter from

the right Honourable Mr. Townshend, conveying to his Excellency the King's entire approbation of your Lordship, and the other noblemen, whom he has recommended to his Majesty, to be created Knights of the order of St. Patrick. His Excellency cannot give a more convincing proof of the high estimation in which the King holds the noble persons who are to be companions of this order, or of his Majesty's desire to gratify the wishes of his nobility of Ireland, than by acquainting your Lordship, that his Majesty has been graciously pleased to take the first stall to himself, and to nominate his Royal Highness Prince Edward to fill the second. His Majesty's letter for carrying the constitution of this order into execution is expected to arrive very shortly, and your Lordship will have the earliest notice of the day which shall be appointed for the investiture.

"I have the honour to be,

"My Lord, &c.

"SACKVILLE HAMILTON."

The installation was conducted with great magnificence. The Lord Lieutenant, with much propriety, ordered that the volunteers should line the streets, in junction with the King's troops, and, by Lord Charlemont's particular desire,

a station was assigned to them within, and about the Cathedral of St. Patrick, so that they particularly assisted at, and, to a certain degree, formed part of the ceremonial. This attention was very pleasing to them. Immense crowds attended the procession of the knights from the Castle to the Cathedral, and Lord Charlemont, as he passed along, was received with applause and acclamation by all ranks of people.

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Horace Walpole, (Lord Orford,) though written somewhat more than two years after the institution of the order of St. Patrick, has its proper place at this period.

" Strawberry-Hill, Nov. 23, 1785.

" As your Lordship has given me this opportunity, I cannot resist saying, what I was exceedingly tempted to mention two or three years ago, but had not the confidence. In short, my Lord, when the order of St. Patrick was instituted, I had a mind to hint to your Lordship, that it was exactly the moment for seizing an occasion that has been irretrievably lost to this country. When I was at Paris, I found in the convent of Les Grands Augustins, three vast chambers filled with the portraits (and their names and titles

beneath,) of all the Knights of the St. Esprit, from the foundation of the order. Every new knight, with few exceptions, gives his own portrait on his creation. Of the order of St. Patrick, I think but one founder is dead yet, and his picture perhaps may be retrieved. I will not make any apology to so good a patriot as your Lordship, for proposing a plan that tends to the honour of his country, which I will presume to call mine too, as it is both by union and my affection for it. I should wish the name of the painter inscribed too, which would excite emulation in your artists.—But it is unnecessary to dilate on the subject to your Lordship, who, as a patron of the arts, as well as a patriot, will improve on my imperfect thoughts, and, if you approve of them, can give them stability.

" I have the honour to be, &c.

" Hor. Walpole."

Lord Charlemont had, I believe, long before the receipt of Mr. Walpole's letter, entertained some ideas, not very dissimilar to those of that gentleman, on this subject; and, had Lord Temple continued in Ireland, would have submitted them to his consideration. But that nobleman's departure, and the short duration of any intimacy between his successor and Lord

Charlemont, prevented his schemes from being carried into execution. It is to be wished, that he had urged the subject to the late Duke of Rutland, who loved and understood painting, and from his situation, as well as disposition, was most likely to patronize what was so properly suggested by Mr. Walpole. The fine arts suffer materially from politics, or a disunion in politics, between persons of exalted rank, who wish to cultivate literature, or whatever is connected with it. Their differences and political engagements occupy so much of their time, that the muses are almost excluded from their society. The only memorandum of Lord Charlemont, relative to this affair, is part of a short note or letter to Mr. Walpole, which has these words. " I should be glad to know whether the Knights of the St. Esprit are drawn in their robes of ceremony? The reason of my question is, that, if such dress were not necessary, as I doubt it is, a series of fashion, as well as of portraits, might be transmitted to posterity." Mr. Walpole's answer is as follows: " Mr. Walpole has received the honour of Lord Charlemont's letter, but is almost incapable of answering it, being laid up by a severe attack of the gout in his whole right arm and hand. The portraits of the Knights of the St Esprit, at Paris, are only heads

on pannel, which touch one another. That of the Comte de Gramont, of which Mr. Walpole has a copy, is in armour. Perhaps the grand masters might be whole, or half lengths, in the dress of the order to shew the habit. Other knights in their own robes of Peers, or in the dress of the times: but it ought to be an inviolable rule, that no fantastic dresses should be allowed in a national and historic monument. Mr. Walpole is not able to say more at present."

Whether any thing further was done, I know not. It may not yet be altogether too late. To advert to the illustration which history may always derive from painting and sculpture is unnecessary. But when we consider that the portrait of a Comte de Gramont, who favoured Hamilton with an opportunity of writing the most singular, and certainly the most agreeable book that perhaps ever was read, could only be found in such a collection as has been mentioned, it is not idle to indulge a wish, that such historic assemblages of portraits should be made, whenever an occasion presents itself. Every age, and every class of mankind, is more or less fertile in extraordinary personages; and we might surely compound with many a faithful, though most uninspiring resemblance of illustrious

knights, or even a long line of decorated inanity, for the original picture of any man who adorned society, or whose refined and peculiar gaiety of conversation, like that of Gramont, has become the source of amusement, nay delight, to successive generations.

Something, I hope not much, remains to be said with regard to the proposed renunciation of the right of the British Legislature to make any law whatever to bind Ireland. The measure itself might well be passed over; but a few recorded circumstances relative to it, may tend to shew the history of the people and the times. With such circumstances Lord Charlemont also was much connected. He was perfectly satisfied with what had been done for securing the independency of Ireland; and although he thought that some short preamble, totally relinquishing all claims in future, should have preceded the repeal, he considered such an addition as of little importance, and rested secure that after what had passed, nothing further would or could be attempted hostile to our rights. To solicit, or demand in any way, a solemn renunciation from the English Parliament, Lord Charlemont thought very unwise, and repeatedly declared, that he would not be accessary to such a step, as he was

afraid that such solicitation might be construed into an acknowledgment of some previous right existing in the British Legislature, which he would never allow. On the other hand, discontent was advancing with giant strides, though, at the period which I am now arrived at, the country seemed to remain in an unquiet repose, from the expectation that Lord Temple would, in the true spirit of party, endeavour to procure a renunciatory act, merely to spite his opponents, and mortify the repealists. Such expectation however, was a very weak one.

When Lord Temple first came here, he was of the same opinion with those who thought any renunciation unnecessary, and that Government would depart not less from its dignity than all true policy, if, after such a national settlement, that settlement should again, to a certain degree, be opened, and every new popular requisition acceded to. But Lord Charlemont, who had daily intelligence of what was passing in public, and clearly saw that the enemies to the tranquillity of Ireland would never abandon the 'vantage ground which they had taken, till the point in dispute was conceded to them, thought, that to relinquish that point would be the best chance of dislodging all such perturbed spirits, and

giving rest to the country; that a renunciation, unasked by the Parliament of Ireland, at the worst, was nugatory, and could not produce, at least, any bad effect. His old opinions remained the same, but he wished much to control evil doers, and at the same time meet the wishes of the people. In this mode of thinking, he was supported by the late Chief Baron Burgh. The Lord Lieutenant differed from them, and was supported by many and grave authorities. In such sentiments he continued, till a writ of error to the King's Bench in England, which had been transmitted there, previous to the new order of things, was received and acted upon by Lord Mansfield; who said, that he was obliged to adhere to the ancient usage of his court, and that he knew of no statute which abrogated that usage. This business, of mere accident, (for it was evident that no writ of error could be again sent there from Ireland,) threw the country again into a flame; and a casual judicial proceeding was magnified into national perfidy, and more than Carthaginian breach of faith and compact. The uproar was, if possible, louder than ever. Lord Charlemont, though he strove in the first instance to compose the agitated waves, considered the proceeding in some degree fortunate, as it would be necessary to obviate any such mat-

ter in future; and an occasion now presented itself, which by blending this forensic event, with the popular requisition, might lay the foundation of a total renunciatory act. A draught of such a bill was accordingly sent from hence to Westminster; where, having received some modifications, it was introduced into Parliament, slightly noticed in its passage through both Houses, and finally received the royal assent. In this manner closed the business of renunciation; originally set on foot by a few, and those interested men, it spread, and gradually embraced almost the whole country. Several persons of indisputable judgment, and almost entire integrity, were undoubtedly, when the doctrine was first diffused abroad, of opinion, that it should be supported. But its origin in Parliament was, as I have stated; that the conclusion should somewhat partake of that *pure, disinterested* spirit, which blazoned forth its commencement, the renunciatory act was clandestinely opposed by particular gentlemen, not from any conviction that it was unnecessary, but in hopes of completely embarrassing Lord Temple, to force him from the Viceroyalty, and restore themselves, their junto, and their jobs, to a full radiance and possession of power.

Earl Temple continued here most deservedly a favourite with the people, till the junction of Lord North's and Mr. Fox's parliamentary forces effected that change which took place in April, 1783. The union between him and Lord Charlemont continued undiminished, and the Volunteers of Dublin, co-operating with their noble General, escorted him to the water side, as the only testimonial at that moment in their power, of their gratitude, affection, and reverence. He resigned the sword to Lord Northington.

Robert Henley, Earl of Northington, was son to Lord Chancellor Northington, a nobleman extremely well known, and much talked of in his day. But as wit and talents gradually assume their proper station, and give to their possessor more permanent celebrity than high rank, even when accompanied with no slight abilities ever can confer, the name of his grandfather, Anthony Henley, is, after the lapse of a century, more familiar to many readers, than that of the Keeper of the Great Seal. He was a member of some of King William's and Queen Anne's Parliaments; but he is particularly distinguished as being the intimate companion of Swift for several years, especially during Swift's connexion with the Whigs. Henley is frequently mentioned by

him as a man of letters, wit, and singular humour. By Sir Samuel Garth he was also much esteemed, and had the honour of receiving the dedication of the Dispensary.

Lord Chancellor Northington was, greatly to his credit, the steady friend and supporter of Lord Camden, during that nobleman's early attendance at the bar, and at a time when, from particular circumstances, the aid of such a man as Henley was truly valuable to him. The Chancellor was a boon companion, and this part of his character, without his boisterousness, the Lord Lieutenant inherited. He was much regarded by Mr. Fox, under whose particular influence, I believe, he came to Ireland. It cannot be said that he was precisely that person who should have been sent here at a time so very critical; for his constitution was extremely enfeebled by the gout, and (what should be always attended to in the nomination of a Lord Lieutenant,) his rank, though that of an Earl, was not accompanied by sufficient splendour, to give him that importance so necessary in the eyes of the people. He was regarded as a new man, though his family was, in truth, an old English one. By those who lived in society with him, he was much relished, as being frank, affable, and good-

natured. His secretary (Mr. Windham) came here with great advantages. The name of Windham is familiar to all who know any thing of English history, and he was already distinguished as a scholar, and one who, in all probability, would act no obscure part in politics. He had the fire and the dignity of genius. When a very young man he had paid, as I am informed, a visit to Lord Townshend during that nobleman's Vice-royalty, and perhaps even then saw, or heard enough of the interior of the Irish Cabinet, to doubt, at a future day, the adequacy of his disposition or habits, to encounter such scenes as he had witnessed here, without self-reproach. Something of this distrust appears in a conversation which he had with his friend, Dr. Johnson, a few days previous to his setting out for Ireland. "Never fear, Sir," said Johnson, (whose experience of the world led him to imagine that it would soon dissolve the best intentions of a young and honourable statesman) "never fear, Sir, you will soon become a very pretty rascal."* But happily the moralist was mistaken.

Lord Northington, like his two immediate

* See Boswell's Life of Johnson.

predecessors, had paid every attention to Lord Charlemont. At least, during the commencement of his administration, there was a frequent interchange of civilities. Lord Charlemont was enabled, soon after the Viceroy's arrival, to give what his Excellency considered very effectual assistance to him, in a conference with the Lord Mayor, at the Castle of Dublin. Not long after he received a letter from Lord Northington, an extract from which is here given.

"Dublin Castle, Monday evening.

"I was much disappointed to find, after the liberty I had taken to desire your Lordship's advice in private, upon a former occasion, that I was not to expect to receive it in a more public manner. As I am sure it will not only contribute much to the honour of my administration, but be of essential service to the affairs of this kingdom, to have the advantage of your Lordship's councils, I am to request of your Lordship to allow me to remove the impediment, and give me leave to have the honour of submitting your name for his Majesty's gracious consideration, to be placed as one of the Privy Council of this kingdom. If it will be a measure agreeable to your Lordship, I shall have the highest satisfac-

tion in shewing your Lordship this mark of my esteem and regard. Being, with great esteem,

"My Lord,

"Your most, &c.

"NORTHINGTON."

It may appear very singular that Lord Charlemont had never been nominated a Privy Counsellor. Perhaps the reason was, as he said to the Lord Lieutenant, that he had never applied for any such situation. He told his Excellency, (for on the receipt of this letter he instantly waited on him) that, although he had not thought of requesting such a favour, he could not decline a compliment so politely offered to him. One condition, however, he begged leave to propose, that Mr. Grattan, with whom, close as their political union was, he was still more allied by friendship, should be recommended at the same time for a seat in the Privy Council, otherwise he should, though with not less grateful respect to the Lord Lieutenant, totally relinquish the proposal. It seems that Mr. Grattan had no more applied for this situation than Lord Charlemont, and he was surely well entitled to it. The Viceroy said, that such a proposition did Lord Charlemont honour; that, for Mr. Grattan's character he had a high esteem, though

he had not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with him; and, if agreeable to that gentleman, he would join his name to Lord Charlemont's in his letter to England. Mr. Grattan was consulted, respectfully accepted the offer, and Lord Charlemont and he were accordingly sworn of the Privy Council.

Thus far every thing went well. But the Coalition Ministry was, as to the distribution of offices, gradually attended with the same effects here as in England. Some who had been frowned on, or removed, during the Duke of Portland's administration, now found their way back again to place and situation. Scott rose higher from his fall. Yelverton had indeed been appointed to succeed the lamented Chief Baron Burgh, but his rank at the bar, independent of his connection with the Portland party, seemed to point him out as Burgh's successor. His place of Attorney-General was given to Mr. Fitzgibbon. Mr. Forbes, who had been nominated Solicitor-General by his Grace of Portland, and with a delicacy unexampled, declined the situation till Mr. Carleton,* who then occupied it,

* Now Lord Carleton.

was otherwise provided for, did not chuse to act as colleague to Fitzgibbon. The Coalition Ministry displayed itself in various employments. Much was chequered, and had there been a general harmony of parts, as was in a good measure the case in England, this distribution of light and shade might ultimately have been attended with pleasing effects. But there was no harmony. The old courtiers hated the new, and, being more dextrous, were more successful. The arrangements which I have mentioned, with the exception of Yelverton's, could not have been much relished by Lord Charlemont, and those for whom they were made, could not much relish him. This disinclination, however, must be understood as limited to politics; for, as a private nobleman, all parties valued him; and even as to public matters, his opponents respected him. But respect, and cordial attachment, are very different.

Mr. Windham, who had served as a bond of union on the Viceroy's first coming here, between him and Lord Charlemont, now very wisely preferred the county of Norfolk to the Phœnix Park near Dublin; and retired from his situation. Lord Charlemont had long known and esteemed him, as an accomplished, amiable

man. This secession added much to his chagrin, as might reasonably be expected. Mr. Pelham then came over as secretary. "A name unmusical to Tory ears," in days past, and in the present, not very harmonious to those with whom Mr. Pelham was obliged to coalesce. However, he did not forget his ancestry, and those who love constitutional liberty must regard their memory. At that time, he was here during part of a session only, and that part was sufficiently stormy. He was young, but he steered through it with adroitness. A circumstance, apparently trivial, but meant by the old court to wound Lord Charlemont, took place on the first day of the opening of Parliament. He had been accustomed to move the thanks of the Lords to the Volunteers. But the Duke of Leinster, who acted entirely with Lord Northington's administration, now anticipated him. Neither jealousy, (though his Grace and Lord Charlemont had, in the earlier days of the Volunteers, contended for the command of them) nor the desire of hurting the feelings of the venerable Earl, had, I am convinced, the most feeble operation on his mind. He was proverbially liberal in his sentiments, and always good-natured. But he had a facility of temper which made him too often listen to the suggestions of those, who,

except sometimes from the casualty of rank, were utterly unfit to approach him. Never shall I think of that good nobleman without every sentiment of tenderness and respect. But one of the notable triumphs of the old court in Ireland was the dissolution, when it could be effected, of ancient political friendships. Private friendships, in a country which, with all its impetuosity, has much of the milk of human kindness, were of too strong a cement for their efforts. Several, who were personally attached to each other, always voted on different sides of the House in Ireland. Party never formed that great gulph of separation, which we have seen it effect in London. Besides, the society in Dublin was too limited to admit of it. But when one political friend could be detached, on important questions, from another, some of the members of the old court were uncommonly radiant. So far however, from separating the Duke and Lord Charlemont, this business created only the murmur of a few minutes. Lord Charlemont had too much candour, not to express his surprise to the Duke; but he loved his Grace, and his father, too well to be disturbed by such a passing blot, as the Castle Spells had thrown over their ancient connection.

The Volunteers were not satisfied, because their old General did not move the resolution in their favour, as heretofore; but they could not have been more dissatisfied than many of those who had passed the resolution; and who would gladly have voted, not merely the thanks, but the Volunteers themselves, null and void, could they have done so with safety. That army was become disagreeable, not to say odious, to some persons in power. They menaced certain of the Volunteers in private, and complimented them in public. The menace and the compliment were alike inefficacious. In vain was it insinuated, that their longer continuance in arms would be considered as dangerous to the state. In vain was it declared, with a profusion of courtesies, that no men had ever acted better, and that, as it was now a time of peace, and every constitutional point granted on the part of England, they should look to an honourable repose. This was true, but the sincerity of those who spoke thus was much questioned, and that circumstance spoiled all. No one moved. The only auxiliary, which some impatient politicians could now look to, for the dissolution or decay of the Volunteer army, was time itself, and that would have aided them, though slowly. But proceedings were now to take place, of a nature, it must be confessed, most novel and alarming,

which form a particular epocha in the History of Lord Charlemont, and the Volunteer army, and contributed more than any event whatever, to shake that institution to its utmost foundation. It is necessary here to trace matters to their source.

The progress of the American war had been disastrous in the extreme. But, notwithstanding such disasters, the mass of the people, as well as the cabinet, were not indisposed to the continuance of hostilities, and indulged the hope, that some unexpected series of circumstances, some division in the American army, in the States themselves, or defection on the part of France, if England persevered, would ultimately crown their warfare with success, and bring back America to its ancient subordination. The obstacles which presented themselves to that reduction, had been not unforeseen by the most sagacious in politics, but by the ignorant were disregarded, as owing merely to the temerity of one General, the supineness of another, and the more than common perfidy of the French and Spanish cabinets. It required therefore, according to the last-mentioned class of politicians, nothing more than some greater exertion on our part, to recover our lost laurels, our lost colonies, and subjugate the *natural* enemies of Great Britain, as no slight

portion of Europe is denominated by many, who profess themselves to be no less energetic and loyal subjects, than rational benign Christians. In less than three years after the defeat of Burgoyne, the surrender of Lord Cornwallis took place, and thus the captivity of two armies was requisite to open our eyes, and assuage somewhat of national presumption. That presumption at length, and most reluctantly, gave way. All hope of subduing America, or alleviating the burthens which multiplied ten-fold in our efforts towards that subjection, now vanished from the public mind; but the Cabinet still pursued its course. The people were however weary of the contest, and galling under the weight of taxation, condemned the obstinacy of the Cabinet, and called aloud for the conclusion of the war. From the Cabinet they turned their eyes to Parliament, whose servility they reprobated, and, totally forgetting their own inconsiderate ardour in the prosecution of the war, attributed their sufferings to the inadequate representation of the people, from whence alone, as was asserted, all past calamity flowed. But, in truth, as far as the American contest was productive of calamity, if, at its commencement, the representation had been more extended, Lord North would have had a more extended support; for, unques-

tionably, not only the origin, but the prosecution of that war, were for some years highly popular in various parts of England. The national sentiment however was now changed, and a declaration of the increased influence of the Crown had, under the auspices of a great constitutional lawyer, (Mr. Dunning)* been made by the representatives of the people. For this, and in short, all abuses whatever, a parliamentary reform was loudly called for. In some places, delegates the most respectable for rank and talents were appointed to consider a subject of such magnitude; and Mr. William Pitt, then first advancing to public notice, with every aid that a splendid name, and splendid abilities could give to him, seemed, as a Statesman, to assume to himself the almost exclusive guardianship of this favoured measure, and to render such an illustrious, and necessary tutelage, the best foundation of his own fame, and a more exalted state of public prosperity.

If England had reason to complain of the inadequacy or inequality of its representation in the House of Commons, the people of Ireland had, at least, as much cause to find fault in their's;

* Lord Ashburton.

and, had the subject been confined to county and city meetings, or occasional assemblies of delegates, unexceptionably convened, no question could have arisen as to the propriety, and perhaps real utility, of such discussions. Petitions, the result of those meetings, might have been duly laid before Parliament; and though immediate success, or any thing like it, could not be looked for, the attention of the House of Commons to the original and simple proposition of a parliamentary reform, would not have been diverted to matters of an extraneous nature, and totally hostile to the cause with which they so improperly intermingled themselves. What was the case at the present moment? The voice of England in favour of a reform was re-echoed here, not by the people, constitutionally speaking, but by the Volunteer army, issuing indeed from the people, yet still a military body, numerous and formidable. Parliament had, as Mr. Grattan justly stated, not bullied, but backed by them, overthrown the jurisdiction of another Parliment, and now, however well-intentioned the Volunteer army in general undoubtedly was, it is but too certain that many who belonged to it wished, not to modify, not to meliorate, but at once overset the popular branch of their own legislature, without whose regular, though slow co-

operation, they could have obtained nothing; for all the respectability, rank, property, and sober intellect of the country would have opposed them, and England, though crippled at that time by the war, was not laid prostrate.

The slightest collision however of that nature, every good man in both countries would justly have shuddered at. But the kingdom was now much agitated. A provincial meeting had met at Cork on the 1st of March, 1783, and entered into various resolutions in favour of reform. On the 24th of July following, whilst Lord Charlemont was on a visit at Lurgan, to his friend Mr. Brownlow, he received the annexed letter from the committee of correspondence appointed by the delegates of forty-five Volunteer corps assembled at Lisburne, on the 1st of July, 1783, which committee met at Belfast on the 19th of the same month. It was this committee which corresponded with the Duke of Richmond, Mr. Pitt, and other promoters of reform.*

"Belfast, July 19th, 1783.

"My Lord,

"The very glorious and effectual part your

* Charlemont papers.

Lordship has taken in the emancipation of this kingdom, naturally leads the Volunteers of the north of Ireland to look up to your Lordship, for a decided support in favour of a reform, which your Lordship has already declared meets your warmest approbation.—To a nobleman so well acquainted with the ruinous state of the representation of Ireland, in us to aim at conveying information were superfluous and unnecessary. The day fixed for the Dungannon meeting being very near, viz. the 8th of September next, and our day of meeting as a committee for arranging the information we shall receive, being the 20th of August, we humbly hope your Lordship will favour us before the latter date, with your sentiments at large on this subject, pointing out such *specific mode of reform*, and the most eligible steps leading to it, as come up to your Lordship's ideas. —We have yet another favour to request, viz. that your Lordship would inform us, whether shortening the duration of Parliaments, exclusion of pensioners, limiting the number of placemen, and a tax on absentees, or any of them, be in your Lordship's opinion subjects in which the Volunteers of Ireland ought to interfere; and we more earnestly entreat that your Lordship may favour us with a sketch of such resolutions, as your Lordship would think proper to be proposed at

Dungannon.—Your Lordship will be so good as to address your reply to our chairman, at Lisburne.

"Signed by order, &c."

This letter made a deep impression on Lord Charlemont. It was to him a sufficient indication of what I have already stated, that there were some leaders of the Volunteers, determined not to limit their operations to a parliamentary reform, but to visit, regulate, perhaps controul every department in the state. The points alluded to in their letter met his approbation, the tax on absentees excepted. The principal object, a parliamentary reform, would, he was afraid, be crushed to nothing, amid such a crowd of measures with which they proposed to accompany it. Altogether the business did not seem to him to wear the most propitious aspect. Something however was to be done, and he immediately wrote the following letter. Perhaps few men had ever a more delicate and difficult part to act than Lord Charlemont, not only at the present juncture, but throughout the whole of this momentous business.

"Lurgan, July 24th, 1783.

"GENTLEMEN,

"Please to accept my most sincere acknowledg-

ments for your kind, though I fear, too partial expressions, as well as for the honour you have done me, in applying to me for advice on a matter so justly interesting to you, and so very important to this nation. But while I thank you for your kindness towards me, I cannot avoid perceiving that your partiality has induced you greatly to over-rate my abilities, which are far unequal to the task you have assigned to me. A reform in the representation of Ireland is a measure which most certainly meets with my warmest approbation, and you may be assured that I shall co-operate with every sincere lover of his country, towards the attainment of that desirable object; but to point out a specific mode, is a matter of so difficult a nature, that I should esteem myself presumptuous, if I should attempt it,—certain as I am, that it will require the united efforts, and the most deliberate consideration of the wisest men in this kingdom, to produce such a plan, as may be deemed unexceptionable. The pain, however, which I must at all times feel from being compelled to refuse my immediate compliance with any request of your's, is in the present instance somewhat alleviated, by my being clearly of opinion that it is not now necessary that such mode should be pointed out to you; and since you have been pleased to ask

my advice, permit me, as a sincere friend to the object of our mutual wishes, to advise that, at the Dungannon meeting, the measure alone should be recommended, without specifying any mode whatsoever; which last consideration ought, according to the best of my judgment, to be left *entirely* to the *mature deliberation* of *your Parliament*, and particularly of those representatives whom you are now about to chuse.

Respecting the other points upon which you desire my judgment, they are all of them important, and of nice discussion; but I will abstain from entering into them for this plain reason, that I would heartily recommend it to you, to confine yourselves to the one great measure only, which, when once carried into execution, will infallibly secure all benefits of inferior magnitude,

"I have the honour to be,

"GENTLEMEN,

"Your most obedient,

"and most faithful Servant,

"CHARLEMONT."

The meeting at Dungannon was held on the day appointed, consisting of delegates from 269 military corps. Mr. James Stewart, member

for the county of Tyrone, Lord Charlemont's particular and valued friend, was called to the chair. Lord Bristol, (Bishop of Derry) was also present. Many resolutions were entered into; but the principal one was, "That a committee of five persons from each county be chosen by ballot, to represent this province, (Ulster) in a grand national convention, to be held at noon, in the Royal Exchange of Dublin, on the 10th of November next, to which we trust each of the other provinces will send delegates to digest, and publish, a plan of parliamentary reform, to pursue such measures as may appear to them most likely to render it effectual, to adjourn from time to time, and convene provincial meetings, if found necessary."

An address to the Volunteers of Munster, Connaught, and Leinster, accompanied this resolution, fraught with the loftiest sentiments in favour of liberty, alluding to the events of last year, merely as an incitement to go further, and pouring itself forth in that diffuse and impassioned eloquence, always imposing on men of warm tempers, especially on subjects with which they are little conversant, and exactly adapted to the ardent and precipitant master-spirits of that agitated period. Several subordinate resolutions

were entered into. A proposition relative to the concession of the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics was brought forward; well intentioned, perhaps, but indiscreet, for though that measure was most wisely, (as I shall ever think) adopted by parliament, ten years afterwards, it not only would not have met support from the Protestant part of the community in 1783, but any warm efforts in its favour must have only added to that flame, which already began to blaze with too great violence. Lord Charlemont's friends took the lead in the rejection of this proposition. It clearly indicates the limited space in which the convention moved. But more of this hereafter.

An extract from a letter of Mr. Burke to Lord Charlemont, though it does not allude to the convention, shows in some respect the sentiments of the ministers with whom he was connected, towards Ireland, just at this time.—— "I see with concern that there are some remains of ferment in Ireland, though, I think, we have poured in to assuage it, almost all the oil in our stores. To my astonishment, I hear, that the very throwing out of a bill, in a common parliamentary form, because the renewal of it, by the carelessness of the bringer in, militated with the late

ample grants to you in the colony trade, has been matter of offence to some people. On this it is impossible to say any thing. I am sorry for it. Ireland is an independent kingdom to all intents and purposes. But there are circumstances in the situation of all countries, that no claims made, or allowed, can alter. We cannot reclaim, and I really believe, no creature here wishes to reclaim, one iota of the concessions made. But you are too near us, not to be affected, more or less, with the state of things here. If you quarrel with the present ministry, it will embarrass them undoubtedly; but then you may have those who do not wish so sincerely for making the prosperity of Ireland a very principal part of the bond of union between us. Instead of treaty, to begin with quarrel, about what may be thought fit to ask, is hardly the usage, even of those who are supposed in a sort of natural state of enmity. But I go beyond my mark. A little anxiety for the public in a very critical state, has induced me to exceed the limits prescribed to one who has little natural weight, and no official duty, that calls him to this particular affair, unless it becomes matter of parliamentary discussion."

As the time for the meeting of the convention

now drew near, the Lord Lieutenant and the Government were, and with reason, not at all at their ease, but most wisely forbore any hostility. Indeed, any thing of that sort would then have been as inefficacious on their part, as the efforts of some of the best friends of the Volunteers were unavailing in checking their progress. Many of the delegates however who were chosen, in a good measure soothed the fears of Government. Lord Charlemont, Mr. Brownlow, and three other gentlemen of rank and consequence, were appointed from Armagh. Mr. Stewart, from Tyrone. Several of known loyalty, and inimical to all anarchy, were nominated. Others indeed, of very dissimilar principles, procured seats in the convention. The county of Derry appointed four respectable members, with whom they associated their Bishop, Frederick, earl of Bristol. If this work should chance to survive the present day, those who come after us may not be incurious to learn something, however slight, of that singular man. He was the son of Lord Hervey, so generally, but so imperfectly known, by the malign antithesis, and epigrammatic lines of Pope. His mother, Lady Hervey, was also the subject of that poet's muse; but his muse when playful and in good humour Two noblemen of very distinguished talents, the

Earls of Chesterfield and Bath, have also celebrated her in a most witty and popular ballad.* Lord Bristol was a man of considerable parts, but far more brilliant than solid. His family was indeed famous for talents, equally so for eccentricity; and the eccentricity of the whole race shone out, and seemed to be concentrated in him. In one respect, he was not unlike Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, "Every thing by starts, and nothing long." Generous, but uncertain; splendid, but fantastical; an admirer of the fine arts, without any just selection, engaging, often licentious in conversation; extremely polite, extremely violent;—it is indubitably true, that amidst all his erratic course, his bounty was not seldom directed to the most proper and deserving objects. His distribution of church livings, chiefly, as I have been informed, among the older and respectable clergy in his own diocese, must always be mentioned with that warm approbation which it is justly entitled to. It is said, (how truly I know not) that he had applied for the Bishopric of Durham, afterwards for the Lieutenancy of Ireland; was refused

* See the verses on Molly Lepel. Lady Hervey was the daughter of General Lepel.

both, and, *hinc illæ lacrymæ*, hence his opposition. But the inequality, the irregular flow of his mind at every period of his life, sufficiently illustrate his conduct at this peculiar and momentous period.—Such however was this illustrious prelate, who, notwithstanding he scarcely ever attended Parliament, and spent most of his time in Italy, was now called upon to correct the abuses of Parliament, and direct the vessel of state in that course, where statesmen of the most experience, and persons of the calmest judgment, have had the misfortune totally to fail.—His progress from his diocese to the Metropolis, and his entrance into it, were perfectly correspondent to the rest of his conduct. Through every town on the road he seemed to court, and was received, with all warlike honours; and I remember seeing him pass by the Parliament House in Dublin, (Lords and Commons were then both sitting) escorted by a body of dragoons, full of spirits and talk, apparently enjoying the eager gaze of the surrounding multitude, and displaying altogether, the self-complacency of a favourite Marshal of France, on his way to Versailles, rather than the grave deportment of a Prelate of the church of England.

The convention met in Dublin, at the Royal Exchange, when, as preparatory to every thing else, they chose Lord Charlemont their President. "The same reason," says his Lordship,* "which has induced me to accept the nomination from Armagh, and to persuade many moderate friends of mine, much against their wishes, to suffer themselves to be delegated, namely, that there should be in the assembly, a strength of prudent men sufficient, by withstanding or preventing violence, to secure moderate measures, induced me now to accept the troublesome and dangerous office of President, which was unanimously voted to me. Another reason also concurred to prevent my refusal. The Bishop of Derry had, I knew, done all in his power to be elected to that office, and I feared that, if I should refuse, the choice might fall on him, which would indeed have been fatal to the public repose." The delegates being very numerous, the place of meeting was altered from the Exchange, the rooms of which were too small, to the Rotunda, in Rutland-Square. Lord Charlemont, as President, led the way, accompanied by a

* Charlemont papers, memorandums, &c.

squadron of horse; then followed the delegates, who walked two and two, and formed a procession altogether as novel as imposing.

The convention now sat in form, and presented, according to Lord Charlemont, "a numerous, and truly respectable body of gentlemen. For, though some of a lower class had been delegated, by far the majority were men of rank and fortune, and many of them members of Parliament, Lords and Commoners; a circumstance which may be in some degree attributed to my endeavours. For, though I never cordially approved of the meeting, yet, as I found it impossible to withstand the general impulse towards it, and, as for reasons already assigned, I did not chuse to exert myself against it, especially as there was cause to fear my exertions would be fruitless, and if so, might prevent my being useful towards moderating and guiding those measures which I could not with efficacy oppose, and directing that torrent which might otherwise have swept down all before it, I had, upon mature consideration, determined that to render the assembly as respectable as possible, was the next best mode to the entire prevention of it; and this, not only for the

sake of public tranquillity, but the measure also which it meant to forward."*

Such were the well-meant efforts of Lord Charlemont. But when the convention proceeded to business, it was soon found, that his moderation and good sense, aided by the most respectable in that convention, would too often prove altogether inefficient. Though Mr. Brownlow, a wise man, and carrying with him that authority which wisdom and integrity, supported by large possessions, will very generally command, was chairman of the committee, into which the convention resolved itself; though other gentlemen, the most respectable, formed the sub-committee, whose business it was to receive plans of reform, the violent, untutored, and unprincipled, sometimes prevailed, and carried resolutions, totally contrary to the wishes of the President or Chairman.

A singular scene was soon displayed, and yet such a scene as any one, who considered the almost unvarying disposition of an assembly of that nature, and the particular object for which

* Minutes of the convention, memorandums, &c.

it was convened, might justly have expected. From every quarter, and from every speculatist, great clerks, or no clerks at all, was poured in such a multiplicity of plans of reform, some of them ingenious, some which bespoke an exercised and rational mind, but, in general, as I have been well assured, so utterly impracticable, "So rugged and so wild in their attire," they looked not like "the offspring of inhabitants of the earth, and yet were on it;" that language would sink in pourtraying this motley band of incongruous fancies, of mis-shapen theories, valuable only if inefficient, or execrable, if efficacious. All this daily issued from presumptuous empirics, or the vainly busy minds of some political philanthropists, whom the good breeding alone of their countrymen permitted to be regarded as not totally out of their senses. The committee shewed a perseverance almost marvellous, but the murky conceits, and solemn vanities of such pretenders, would have put even the patience of the man of Uz to flight. At last, after being for several days bewildered in this palpable obscure of politics, and more and more theories flitting round the heads of the unfortunate committee, *that* which must for ever take place on such occasions, took place here. A dictator was appointed, not indeed in name, but substance.

The Bishop of Derry moved, that Mr. Henry Flood, who had not been one of the committee, should be nominated, as an assessor, or joint member. And here was displayed the potency of oratorical talents in such a body of men, and the justice of Lord Bolingbroke's observation, that the House of Commons, or in short, any assembly partaking of the nature of the House of Commons, is like a pack of hounds. They will always follow the man who shews them most game. So rapid and decisive was the superiority which Flood obtained, that without his concurrence, nothing was approved of. The Bishop now, as has been often experienced, found himself undone by his auxiliary. All his hopes of pre-eminence in the convention, and elsewhere, rested on his ill-timed support of the elective franchise, as a measure then, and *at once*, to be conceded to the Catholics. The grossest adulation would blush to say, that this support arose from superior discernment, or superior benevolence. Yet, when we consider his peculiar volatility, his long residence on the Banks of the Arno or the Tiber, and general society there, we may justly conclude that, at any period of our history, *Tros, Tyriusve*, Catholic or Protestant Electors, or Statesmen, would have been objects of the most entire in-

difference to him. They, in truth, were so, and his propositions, as to the Catholics, though dignified by his adherents, with the terms of highly philosophical, were resisted by Flood, with that gentleman's usual success. This rejection of the Catholic, brought forward various plans of reform in favour of the Protestants, or the electors as they *then* stood. Flood's angry frown, and angry comments, exiled them all. Adieu to all the theories, phlegmatic or airy, of the learned and the unlearned! They were no more heard of. At last, Mr. Flood produced his own plan for new modelling the House of Commons. It was unanimously adopted by the inferior, and then submitted to the grand committee, as it was called. A long debate arose. The difficulties under which the assembly laboured in this great work of legislation, were now apparent. Flood's plan, notwithstanding all his subtle interpretations and comments, was, on sober investigation, found not much superior to many which preceded it. Nay, there were some who, like Dangle in the play, thought that the interpreter was the hardest to be understood of any of his coadjutors. But, with all his plan's acknowledged imperfections, it was submitted to, as the best that could be patronized without putting the assembly to the blush,

and, indeed, the state itself to the most imminent hazard.

A short scene was now acted, and, according to all the rules of criticism, in perfect unison with the former. Two or three Lords and Gentlemen, who possessed borough property, declared in the Convention, that any proper plan of reform should meet no obstacle from such possessions remaining in their hands. They would willingly relinquish them for the benefit of the people. Immediately after those gentlemen, who at that moment of enthusiasm were, I make no doubt, perfectly serious in what they said, and were capable of very generous derelictions, up rose several patriotic personages, and professing equal ardour in the public cause, made similar renunciations. Unfortunately, however, *their* pretensions to this invidious species of property were by no means so unequivocal. Some of those boroughs which they were pleased to call exclusively their own, presented only very debateable ground, and were in general known to those gentlemen, merely by the long sufferings which they sustained for even a dubious and transitory interest in them. To abandon such boroughs altogether would, at any time, be consummate prudence. To immolate a set of voters,

periodically corrupt, or law agents perpetually rapacious, would be most laudable, if a convention or reform had never been heard of. "Upon such sacrifices, the Gods themselves, would," I think, "throw incense;" could they have really been made. Yet, with no other offerings to lay on the altar of public freedom, than what might justly be termed their own personal embarrassments, and molestations, did those gentlemen rise, one after the other, and, with the most untired gravity, nobly bestow on the people their untenable claims, and unsound interests. But they seemed resolved, on that day, that every proceeding in the Convention should be almost ideal, and visionary plans of reform were followed by imaginary proscriptions of family electors.

Those shadows having passed over the scene in very solemn and ridiculous order, the eyes of the spectators were at length tired of such mock-heroic visions, and all turned towards Lord Charlemont. An enemy to ostentation, and always averse to public speaking, he had hitherto remained silent. But he found it necessary now to say something. "My determination," said his Lordship, "to sacrifice to the public that borough, which I have ever held in trust for the

people, was, I thought, sufficiently declared, by my acceptance of a seat at this meeting. That trust I have at all times endeavoured to execute to the public advantage; and I can assure this assembly, that I have never felt so much real satisfaction in the exercise of those powers, which, as a trustee for the people, have been confided to me, as I now do, in resigning them." The convention, and indeed all his auditory were to the utmost gratified by this declaration, and applauded it as the language of sincerity and true patriotism.—Flood's plan of reform having now passed the ordeal of the two committees, was finally reported to the convention, where the Bishop of Derry again brought forward his proposal in favour of the Catholics, and was supported by several of the delegates. Lord Charlemont and his friends opposed him strenuously, and again left him in a minority. The point was warmly discussed. These repeated differences did not contribute much to the establishment of any cordial amity between the noble Prelate and the Earl. The former, one day, whilst the Convention was employed on something unimportant, ventured to hint to Lord Charlemont, as they sat for some minutes apart together, "That his conduct was by no means generally approved of," (alluding, it is presumed, to the

Catholic business,) "and that he was considered as rather lukewarm in favour of a reform." To this suggestion Lord Charlemont replied, as may be imagined, with some warmth. A short, and somewhat unpleasant conversation took place, not at all necessary now to detail, but which closed with these words of Lord Charlemont: "The difference which I make between the present and the former objects of our exertions is this: Whilst Ireland was in effect subject to a foreign legislature, there were no lengths I would not have gone to rescue her from a state, which I considered as positive slavery. To that point I had pledged my life and fortune, and towards the attainment of it, I would willingly and cheerfully have hazarded not only them but what was, and still is more dear to me, and far more important, the peace of my country. Our present object I esteem great, and of high importance, and to obtain it, will do every thing not inconsistent with the public peace. But I will go no further. Make what use of this you please." The Convention proceeded to business, and the Bishop withdrew.

After three weeks sitting, the labours of the Convention seemed to draw towards an end. Lord Charlemont's health had suffered much

from so close a confinement, and he looked with pleasure to the moment, when he could resume his daily exercise, and literary occupations. That moment did not arrive as soon has he expected. The commencement of the Convention was inauspicious, but the conclusion was agitating and eventful beyond any period in its history.—It is not to be forgotten, that Parliament had met the end of October, and was at this time actually sitting. To the astonishment of Lord Charlemont, Flood arose in the Convention, about four o'clock in the afternoon of Saturday, November 29th, and proposed, that he, accompanied by such Members of Parliament, as were then present, should immediately go down to the House of Commons, and move for leave to bring in a bill, exactly correspondent in every respect, to the plan of reform which he had submitted to, and was approved of by, the Convention. To this proposition he added another, "That the convention should not adjourn till the fate of his motion was ascertained." A more complete designation, and avowal of a deliberative assembly, co-existing with Lords and Commons, and, apparently, of co-extensive authority, could scarcely be made. It was, in truth, like bringing up a bill from the Bar of one House of Parliament to that of another. Both motions were

acceded to. The impropriety, the imprudence of such a step, were deeply felt by Lord Charlemont. That the gentlemen who adopted Mr. Flood's proposition did not see it in this light, or seeing its real complexion, did not abandon it, may be partly attributed to the ascendancy which Flood had, at this time, obtained over most of them, as well as to that extreme ardour, which, pursuing a favoured object, overlooks or contemns all obstacles. Lord Charlemont had received a hint of this extraordinary movement from Flood, but it was no more than a hint; and on his remonstrating against it, that gentleman seemed to have abandoned it. Nor would he perhaps have brought it forward at all, certainly not then, had he not been impelled by particular personal motives. His great ambition was to take the lead in this business of reform; and as he at that time looked to a seat in the British House of Commons, (which he soon after obtained,) his views would, as he imagined, be most powerfully aided by his splendid exertions in the Convention, as well as the Irish Parliament, and enable him to aspire to superior rank and authority among the Reformists in England, as well as those of Ireland. The time however pressed, and he was obliged to go to London in a very few days. To relinquish the honour of moving the ques-

tion of reform to any one, he could not think of, and the eagerness of some delegates co-operating with his own personal convenience, he hurried it into the House of Commons. Thus is there a secret history in all public transactions, and that history not always the most brilliant.

Parliament now became the theatre of popular exertion. Whoever was present in the House of Commons on the night of the 29th of November, 1783, cannot easily forget what passed there. I do not use any disproportionate language, when I say, that the scene was almost terrific. Several of the minority, and all the delegates, who had come from the Convention, were in uniforms, and bore the aspect of stern hostility. On the other hand, administration being supported on this occasion by many independent gentlemen, and having at their head very able men, such as Mr. Yelverton,* and Mr. Daly, presented a body of strength not always seen in the ministerial ranks, looked defiance to their opponents, and indeed seemed almost unassailable. They stood certainly on most advanta-

* Afterwards Lord Avonmore, and Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

ous ground, and that ground given to them by their adversaries. Mr. Flood, flushed with his recent triumphs in another place, and enjoying the lofty situation which his abilities always placed him in, fearlessly led on the attack. Mr. Yelverton answered him with great animation, great strength of argument, and concluded with a generous, dignified appeal to the Volunteers, whom he applauded for every part of their conduct, the present alone accepted. Some speeches followed in a similar tone, but the minds of men soon became too heated to permit any regular debate whatever.—It was uproar, it was clamour, violent menace, and furious recrimination! If ever a popular assembly wore the appearance of a wild and tumultuous ocean, it was on this occasion; at certain, and those very short intervals, there was something like a calm, when the dignity of Parliament, the necessity of supporting the Constitution, and danger of any military assembly, were feelingly and justly expatiated on. The sad state of the representation was, with equal truth, depicted on the other side. A denial of Volunteer interference, and the necessity of amending the representation, whether Volunteers existed or not, was, in the first instance, made with very imperfect sincerity, and in the latter, with genuine candour. To this

again succeeded tumult and confusion, mingled with the sad and angry voices of many who, allied to boroughs, railed at the Volunteers like slaves, not gentlemen, and pretended to uphold the Constitution, whilst they were, in truth, appalled at the light that now began, as their terror suggested, to pervade their ancient and ambiguous property. But the imprudence of the Volunteers was of more service to such men than all their array of servile hostility; on that night at least, it proved their best safeguard, and placed them not within the shadowy, uncertain confines of a depopulated borough, where they could find no safety, but under the walls of the Constitution itself. The tempest, (for towards morning debate there was almost none) at last ceased; the question was put, and carried, of course, in favour of government, their numbers 159, those of the opposition, 77. This was followed, and wisely too, by a resolution "declaratory of the fixed determination of the House to maintain its privileges and just rights against any encroachments whatever; and that it was then indispensably necessary to make such a declaration." An Address to be carried up to the Throne, as the joint Address of Lords and Commons, was then moved for, in which, after expressing their perfect satisfaction in his

Majesty's government, they declared their determined resolution to support that government, and the Constitution, with their lives and fortunes. This Address was carried to the Lords, and immediately agreed to.

We must now go back to the Convention.—After sitting two hours, or more, and receiving no intelligence from Mr. Flood, Lord Charlemont, suspecting that which had now taken place, and dreading least the delegates, who, to make use of his own phrase, had put themselves clearly in the wrong, might plunge still deeper in error, if they continued at that time to sit any longer, prevailed on them to adjourn to the Monday following. All his address was required to carry this point, and no other person would, at that time have, perhaps, succeeded. The next day (Sunday) there was a large meeting at Charlemont House, of his particular friends, who unanimously agreed, that the public peace should be the first object of their attention. Messages were received from several delegates, of whom Lord Charlemont had scarcely any personal knowledge, that they were ready to follow him in any measure he should propose. On Monday morning he took the chair at an earlier hour than usual, at the Convention.

A gloomy, sullen taciturnity prevailed for some time; at length a delegate arose, and began to inveigh against the House of Commons. This was exactly what Lord Charlemont expected, and, at all hazards, resolved to put an end to. He immediately arose, called the delegate to order, and said, "That one of the wisest usages in Parliament was, never to take notice in one House of what was said in another. The observance of such a rule, he then begged particularly to recommend to the Convention." The propriety of this speech was instantaneously felt; and, though many subsequent efforts were made, tending to misrule and anarchy, such was the respect paid to Lord Charlemont, that the utmost tranquillity prevailed. To insure that tranquillity, it was absolutely necessary to convince the delegates, that, notwithstanding what had passed in Parliament, the original object of their meeting should in no wise be departed from, and, that a Parliamentary Reform should be as sedulously attended to, though in a different form, as it had been before. Lord Charlemont's plan, at the original meeting of the Convention, was, to prevent the most remote intercourse between Parliament and that Assembly. That the delegates, the Convention being previously dissolved, should lay the scheme of reform, which seemed

to be most approved of, before their county meetings, regularly convened; and if that, *or any other* scheme, should be particularly regarded, then, to recommend such measure to their representatives, and petition Parliament on the subject. This plan effectually guarded against any direct conflict, at least, between Parliament and the Convention; and though, in fact, its military origin could not be altogether denied, if the scheme of that Assembly was *alone* proposed, yet it was so soon to be clothed in the garb of the Constitution alone, by being laid before the people, and by them again, through the medium of their representatives, before Parliament, that it was almost above exception, and perhaps the best that, in such a peculiar situation as matters then stood, could be devised. But Flood's genius, as we have seen, prevailed. On the present day of meeting, it was absolutely incumbent not to suffer the Convention to depart without keeping some plan of reform still before their eyes; without this, the delegates would not have been pacified, nor indeed could it be expected. The following resolutions were, therefore, proposed, and most warmly and unanimously adopted.

Resolved unanimously,—That it is highly necessary for the delegates of counties, cities, and towns, in conjunction with the other freeholders

of their several counties, to forward the plan of reform agreed to by this Convention, by convening county meetings, or whatever other constitutional mode they may find most expedient; and that they not only instruct their representatives to support the same in Parliament, but also request the members of the several cities, towns, boroughs, and manors, within their county, to aid in carrying the same into effect.

Resolved unanimously.—That the necessity of a Parliamentary Reform is manifest, and that we do exhort the nation, by every constitutional effort, to effectuate such Reform.

But the business did not close here.—To the severe, yet gentlemanlike reprehension, which many respectable members of the House of Commons considered themselves, as justified by the occasion, to use towards the Volunteers, had been added many, and most intemperate, expressions against them by others, not the wisest or best part of the House. An Address to the King was, therefore, resolved on; a protestation of their loyalty to their Sovereign, and attachment to Great Britain, being regarded as the most dignified replication that could be made. The Address was conceived in very dutiful terms, and concluded with these words:—"And to implore

your Majesty, that our humble wish to have certain manifest perversions of the Parliamentary Representation of this Kingdom remedied by the Legislature in some reasonable degree, may not be imputed to any spirit of innovation in us, but to a sober and laudable desire to uphold the Constitution, to confirm the satisfaction of our fellow subjects, and to perpetuate the cordial union of both kingdoms." Lord Charlemont, fully aware of the evil consequences that might ensue from the continuance of such an assembly in the Metropolis, under the circumstances it was now placed, most wisely insisted, that no other business should be proceeded on, and the Convention finally adjourned.

Thus closed this celebrated meeting, which there is every reason to wish had never been convened. To deviate from candour, would ill accord with the venerable name which can alone perhaps, give any thing like permanency to these memoirs, and an adherence to truth, is the great duty of any historian, to which all other considerations must necessarily yield. From the personal characters of the leading delegates, nothing dangerous to the state was to be apprehended. But the very reasons which most of them assigned for accepting such a situation, proved, more than any thing else could, the

irregularity and impropriety of the meeting. They consented to be chosen, in order to prevent mischief. What could any rational man expect from an assembly which, in its very formation, carried with it the seeds of civil confusion? Happily for Ireland, Lord Charlemont, and men like him, prevented such seeds from coming to maturity. Yet with all their influence, they were, in some instances, obliged to give way. To put a stop originally to any Convention whatever, was beyond their power. The increase, the success of the volunteers, stimulated them to pass the line of sound discretion, and they would have formed a convention, though their loved General had openly declared himself totally inimical to it. Many acted unquestionably from the purest motives; others from perfect good wishes to the state, mingled with no small attention to their own family interests; and the volunteers, in one particular district, were brought forward to aid those interests and the common cause at the same time. They were called forth, too, at this particular period, because those who knew them best, were perfectly sensible that their intervention would otherwise be too late, or that they could not be collected at all; the institution being, in that district, and some other places, even then, rather on the decline. This may surprize many readers,

but the fact was indubitably so. There were also some who entered into the Convention, for the purposes of mischief, the popular interest altogether predominated, and when the Convention sat, the mass of the delegates acted as assemblies, merely popular, ever will act. They wandered over a multiplicity of objects, sometimes as reason, sometimes as caprice dictated; liberal in sentiment, arbitrary in conduct, till a man of superior abilities (Flood) arose, and for a time ruled them with absolute sway. So closely do the confines of multitudinous and personal despotism touch each other, and so certain is it that, when the people seem to govern with almost uncontrolled authority, do they most approximate to the solitary rule of an individual. How did this assembly act? At its very onset it claimed an authority not at all inferior to that of the Legislature, (the common phrase was, that the Convention was the true Parliament,) and at its conclusion, it rushed forward with propositions for the instant adoption of the House of Commons. Had such an intervention been in the slightest degree successful, it is evident, to any thinking person, that the remedy would have been infinitely worse than the disease. Such a victory over the House of Commons, could not have terminated there, for nei-

ther the volunteers, nor the people, would have been satisfied with it. They might have said that they would, and at the moment been sincere in such a declaration, but moderation and victory do not often accompany each other, and as seldom at least, in civic contests, as military hostility. The demagogues of that day, would not have followed the chariot wheels of the members of a Convention, as the monitory attendant of the Conqueror in a Roman triumph, to recal him to himself, to control his pride, and mitigate his presumption; but they would have followed for the purposes of applauding their temerity, and extending their dominion. They would have taken care to tell them how near they were in their visitation to the House of Commons, to that of the Lords; and that they would do nothing if they did not dislodge some of the Bishops at least, or go a little further at once, and erect the standard of the Convention, on the ruins of episcopacy and aristocracy. To all such enlarged notions, or benevolent hints, of what an armed, successful Convention might, or ought to do, the assembly of which I now treat would not perhaps have immediately listened, at least, all the good and wise who sat there, would not; and I believe it is as certain that, in such a case, an equal portion of popular hatred would

have attended the reformers, and the reformed; the Convention, as well as the House of Commons. Another Convention would have arisen, or a secession from the old one taken place, and confusion would have been worse confounded.

That Conventions may be necessary, no one but a slave can deny. The history of the Revolution has proved it; but a repetition, or too frequent recurrence of such assemblies, may be dreaded, even by the most strenuous advocates for popular privilege; for the collective power of the people, by being brought in that manner perpetually into action, will naturally exhaust itself; it will lose all its fire, and cease to have that just, but regulated controul over the democratic part of the legislature, which the genius and Spirit of the Constitution most certainly invested it with. In truth, all liberty would be ultimately destroyed; for, if there is danger to be apprehended from any assembly not strictly known to the Constitution, with whatever portion of the property, integrity, and wisdom, of the country, that assemby may be connected, there is, on the other hand, much, very much, to be dreaded from the unprincipled, obsequious servants of power, who, with the ardour of low-cunning, catch at the slightest errors of

generous minds, and are enamoured with any irregularity of freedom, as, sooner or later, it enables them to give some wound to liberty itself. —What then, it may be asked, is to be done?— *Nec Deus intersit*, is as sound a precept, in the formation of such assemblies, as the construction of poetic machinery. Let them never be brought together, if the general sentiment does not, beyond all contradiction, loudly, yet gravely, and not unfrequently, proclaim, that the existence of the nation itself demands their interference. "The power of impeachment," said Lord Somers, once in the House of Commons,* " should be like Goliah's sword, kept in the temple, and not used but on great occasions." The same may be said of Conventions.

The reader who may not remember the days of this military convention will be naturally anxious to enquire, what sensation its adjournment, or rather indeed its downfall, excited? To the best of my recollection, little, or none whatever. This indifference can be accounted for;— its basis, from circumstances at that time perhaps insuperable, was altogether too narrow; the delegates did not, nor could they then include

* See Grey's Debates.

the Catholic body; yet, to talk of extending the right of suffrage wherever property was to be met with, and, at the same time, shut out the majority of the nation, was a strange contradiction. That the Catholics, therefore, should lament the extinction of an assembly, which, whilst it proposed to erect a temple of general freedom, could not bring them even within the vestibule, was not at all to be expected.—There were other reasons which had their influence on all thinking men, who stood aloof from the House of Commons as well as the Convention, and regarded the proceedings of both impartially.——This Convention was, independent of its military origin, which alone was sufficient to condemn it, the least justifiable of any Convention that ever sat in Ireland. It thought proper to meet, not only immediately after the Revolution of 1782, but directly, at the same time, with a new Parliament, whose character, or whose temper, on any subject, had not been tried at all; and superadded to that, the particular subject for the promotion of which the Convention now met, (a Parliamentary Reform,) had never, as a question of debate, been entertained by any House of Commons whatever in Ireland. So that here was a Revolution, a new Parliament treading on the heels of that Revolution, and a subject, totally novel, to be taken up by that Parliament. But,

without having the patience to see what influence that Revolution would have on a new Parliament, or how far it might effect such a popular question particularly; and of course, having no possible pretext to say, that the petitions of the people were disregarded as to that point, (none indeed had been presented,) the Convention came instantly to a conflict with Parliament. The consequences were such as might be expected. Parliament stood on such 'vantage ground, that the Convention instantly broke down.

Some considerations may also be added to the above, which made much impression on part of the community, and must be enlarged on here. If it is necessary to animadvert, not unfrequently, on the misconduct of ministers, it is necessary also to take notice of the faults of the people. Despicable is that man, who, to sooth their ear, dwells with a malign and vulgar satisfaction on the errors of their rulers, and never touches on their own. In August, 1783, that is three months before the meeting of the Convention in Dublin, the Parliament was dissolved, and a new one summoned to meet. Here then, were the people called forth to act their part in the choice of new representatives. If it be sullenly said, that the system of representation circumscribed the po-

pular choice in too narrow limits, I accede to the proposition; but I beg to add, that it was not *so* bound in as to prevent its coming forth at all. Numerous as the boroughs were, still they did not overspread the entire field of elections; the counties and several free towns remained; yet most certain is it, that not one county, not one free town, or corporation,* throughout the kingdom, expressed their own or the people's gratitude, by electing any one of the eminent men who had so recently, and so gloriously, led them on to the best victory—the triumph of rational freedom. Nay, some country gentlemen, who had, in the late contest, acted a part the most independent, were thrown out. Let it be remembered too, that some portions of the country had divided themselves into parties. One was for simple repeal, as already stated; the other, for renunciation by Act of Parliament; and, according to the usual acerbity which distinguishes very unimportant feuds of mankind, they began to hate each other with almost as perfect cordiality as they hated the usurpations

* I do not include the county of Wexford, for instance, where Mr. Ogle, who had been one of the most strenuous advocates for the rights of the people, was again elected. But his strength was irresistible. The same may be said of Mr. Brownlow, and two or three more perhaps.

of the British Parliament. It might therefore be expected, by those who know what mankind really is, that party division would effectuate that which public spirit had neglected to do; and, as Mr. Flood was the renowned leader of one party, some place might be found where that party predominated, which would return him to Parliament, but nothing of the sort took place.

Mr. Flood, and his illustrious rival, were obliged to wander, as far as elections extended, through this mist of popular oblivion, and find their way to Parliament in any manner they could. The Borough of Charlemont once more silently received Mr. Grattan, and Mr. Flood had great difficulty in finding any seat whatever. At this very moment were demagogues rushing forth from every corner in quest of a Parliamentary reform, vociferating that the people could not elect a single friend, and dissatisfied with all that had been done in both Parliaments, unless they could give a freer and more expanded utterance to the voice of the constituent, which voice, when called upon by the Constitution itself to speak, was, as to the chief upholders of that Constitution, no where to be heard. The inconsistency, the unreasonableness of such proceedings certainly disinclined many to the

Convention, and they beheld its abrupt dissolution, not merely with unconcern, but satisfaction. It is proper to record such things. No people ever yet existed, of warmer hearts, and more lively gratitude, than the Irish. But the public here, as elsewhere, has its levity, its days, its months, of idle, arbitrary domination. And of all unreasonable expectations, what can be more so, than that the person who has embarked solely in their service, should proceed in his course, with either energy or efficacy, under the chill of their neglect, or the miserable uncertainty of their frowns or their smiles? The philosophic representative who knows what the people, the "fond many," have been, in all ages, may continue to serve them, unmoved by their clamours; but he who engages in public life, with equal purity of mind at first, but less firm purpose, will only encounter similar discouragements for a stated period; he will not wait for a return of their good humour. After some conflicts with himself, he at length abandons comparative poverty, caprice, and the crowd, for affluence, constancy, and the court. This is not the course of heroism, but how little heroism is, in truth, to be met with; and if that little finds not its natural reward in the sunshine of the people's general attachment, what right have the people

to complain? With a few sentences more I shall close the subject of the Convention. It has led me further than I intended; but a sincere wish to guard my countrymen against the blandishments of every specious novelty must be my apology. They may rest assured, that the established forms of the Constitution embrace almost every possible mode of redress of public grievances; and that, impatiently to seek a new path, in quest of that which can certainly, though slowly perhaps, be obtained, by pursuing the old parliamentary road, may dazzle their imaginations, and even recreate their minds for a moment, but will only terminate in darkness and confusion. It has been said, that the majority which resisted Mr. Flood's motion was composed of the usual Swiss of the Castle, and the entire array of the borough-holders. But it was not so. The friends of one, or, I believe, two or three noblemen, who had boroughs, voted with Mr. Flood. In the majority were many gentlemen totally unconnected with administration; who, on other occasions, voted against Lord Northington; and were unequivocally friends to the measure of a parliamentary reform, but objected to the bill then moved for, as originating from an armed as-

sembly.* When Mr. Flood said in the House of Commons, that his sentiments in favour of that bill were his own, and not borrowed elsewhere, Mr. D. Daly quickly, and justly replied; "I do not say, that they are not his own, but they are more notoriously the sentiments of the Convention." Being such, they form the entire justification of the House of Commons in refusing *leave even to bring* in the bill; for, unless some peculiar, and extraordinary circumstances imperiously demand such a negative, *in limine*, the House never adopts it. Their decision was as judicious as spirited. Had it acted otherwise, the reform then urged might have been called a parliamentary, but its only proper denomination would have been a military reform; and

* Many gentlemen, as well as the Author of these Memoirs, must have seen a letter of Mr. Fox, then secretary of state, to the late General Burgoyne, at that time Commander in Chief, in Ireland, on the subject of the Convention. It was written with the spirit of a Patriot, and wisdom of a true Statesman. In his ardour for a parliamentary reform, he yielded, he said, to none of the Convention; but dreaded the consequences of such proceedings, and would, he added, lament it as the deepest misfortune of his life, if by any untoward steps then taken, and whilst he was minister, the two kingdoms should be separated, or run the slightest risque of separation.

what that is, had former ages been as silent as they are instructive on the subject, the dread series of events which have taken place, since the days of the Convention, has most fatally promulgated to the world. But, if the timid acquiescence of the House in the decrees of the Convention, had then established a precedent or submission, and left to the Commons neither name nor authority of any sort, however we might for ever deplore its imbecility, we cannot, on the other hand, applaud its almost continued resistance, during a variety of subsequent and tranquil periods, to the question of reform, when urged as constitutionally as ably. That reform required indeed all the aid which the wisest, and best senators could give to it; and had it been calmly, judiciously, and timely adopted, though it could not have averted every evil from this kingdom, the measure of our misfortunes would, in all probability, have been much less, and our own legislature remained unterrified, and unimpaired.

No particular cordiality had for some time subsisted between Lord Northington and Lord Charlemont. The introduction of Scott and Fitzgibbon, to place and power, had already, in some measure, alienated his Lordship from the

Viceroy, and the Convention had alienated the Viceroy from Lord Charlemont. Matters soon came to a crisis. Lord Charlemont, for some time after the dissolution of the Convention, continued to attend the levees at the Castle. But he was received with such cold civility, that he discontinued his visits altogether. Mr. Brownlow was not spoken to when he went there. This behaviour, on the part of Lord Northington, was puerile and impolitic to the last degree. It is to be presumed, that some of the old court, who, in consequence of the Coalition, had crept once more into favour, influenced his conduct in this particular. He should have recollected, that Lord Charlemont had not set the Convention in motion, and that, if others had plunged it into excesses, his good sense and regained ascendancy over that assembly, drew it forth from the abyss into which it had partly fallen. In acting so, he had done the State essential service. He was aided, on that occasion, by the pacific, salutary councils of Mr. Brownlow, as well as other gentlemen, and they should have been thanked, not frowned upon for their conduct. But in politics there is no medium. It is melancholy to reflect on that perverseness of mankind, which so often baffles every effort of those who are most disposed to

serve them. Though the Convention was perfectly convinced of Lord Charlemont's disinterestedness, and honest zeal in its service, the majority of the delegates, at a moment the most important, deserted him, and went forth to contend with the legislature of their country. When he had over-ruled all tumult, and by his direct influence prevented any breach between them and Government, the chief of that government met him with such an alienated mien, as almost proclaimed him an anarchist. A strange world this!

When Lord Northington opened the session of 1783, every thing, at first, appeared perfectly tranquil. But there was soon an opposition to his Administration. It consisted partly of several persons totally unconnected with the court, some young members of very promising talents, who had never before sat in Parliament, Sir Laurence Parsons* particularly, Mr. Arthur Browne,† and others; Mr. Curran also, who had

* Now Earl of Ross.

† Doctor Arthur Browne, a learned, ingenious, and peculiarly amiable man, whom I always most truly loved. He was a fellow of Trinity College, his Majesty's Prime Serjeant at Law, and one of the representatives of the University in Parliament.

come into the House of Commons on the general election, joined this opposition. But the persons, most hostile to Lord Northington's Administration, were some gentlemen, who openly professed themselves attached to Mr. Pitt, the Grenvilles, and, in short, the English opposition. In this, there was nothing disreputable or improper. Some few sessions however afterwards, when those same persons supported the court system, as if not only they, but their auditors, had been in the habit of drinking the Waters of Lethe, and forgotten all that was said or done, the constant theme of their lamentable declamation was, that all English parliamentary connections, or, acting with any view to English opposition, (no matter how congenial the principles of two parties at this, and the other side of the water, might be,) were in the highest degree reprehensible, and injurious to the interests of Ireland. This band, with the gentlemen before-mentioned, acted in opposition, but not always in concert, and formed altogether, a most miscellaneous, and therefore inefficient association, considering the parts and industry of some who composed it. Mr. Flood was generally at their head, and sometimes fancied that he was, when in fact, he was not, for nothing could be more opposite

than his mode of thinking to the political creed of a few of those gentlemen. Several of this opposition acted, however, to my knowledge, from principles of sound patriotism. But after a short campaign of about six weeks, Mr. Flood, as already mentioned, went to England, and entered the lists against the India bill, when his reputation, as an orator, suffered a transient eclipse; not, however, that sad and lengthened one, which prejudiced, illiberal scoffers, were so malignantly impatient to proclaim to the friends of Ireland. But those who dared to think for themselves, turned from such scoffers with disdain, and towards Flood, with no diminished admiration.

The Coalition Ministry was now overset in its turn. A Ministry which, in my humble opinion, had it been permitted to remain, could have done many and good services to the State. But the swell and agitation of the American war had not then subsided, and during such a tumultuous period, no nation was ever yet much disposed to reflection. To the general mass of the people, the transition from hostility to intimate union, between two violent political opponents, seemed abrupt, sudden, and only made from an unblushing avidity of place and power. That great

parliamentary leaders should look to both, is certainly very natural, but that the statesmen in question acted solely from such motives, or were incapable of making genuine sacrifices to the public weal, I never can suppose. But the fair opinions, or even prejudices, of the more sober part of the community, are by no means to be contemned, and the junction between Lord North and Mr. Fox might, at a day more remote, have been formed, not only without furious obloquy, but almost without observance. If however, they were unguarded, the people were unreasonable. It seemed to be *their* determination, that they should *not* agree; and, however soothing returning amity might be to the usual feelings of mankind, the nation was to be indulged by a promulgation of perpetual war between two Statesmen, the most accessible, as the basest foes have since reluctantly acknowledged, to every humane and generous sentiment. Not only recollecting, but republishing every angry and contumelious expression that had fallen from Mr. Fox in the violence of an almost ten years' parliamentary warfare; those enemies boldly declared that, as he and the noble Lord had differed on one subject, then for ever closed, it was impossible that they could agree on any other whatever. Such was the language

held at this period, and it was successful. Many excellent men however, Lord John Cavendish, and others, were not to be swayed by it. They adhered to the Ex-Statesman, and the approbation of such ornaments to their country should, by a mind that reflects justly, be regarded as at least a full equivalent for the loss of power.

Lord Northington now shared the fate of his friends, and retired from the Lieutenancy of Ireland. The Duke of Rutland succeeded him. Young, and not conversant in business, but amiable, generous, and convivial, he became, from his first coming here, the favourite of the higher orders of the State, and would have been equally so with the lower, had not one or two questions been agitated directly after his arrival, which in Parliament excited no commotion, but were eagerly laid hold on by some untoward spirits without doors, to aid the cause of mischief and sedition, which they so perversely maintained. On that subject a word or two hereafter. The Duke's court was magnificent; a succession of various entertainments took place, over which the presence of the Duchess of Rutland, then, confessedly, one of the most beautiful women perhaps in Europe, diffused an animation and

radiance totally unexampled. Social pleasure, (so congenial to the disposition of the Irish) were agreeably cultivated; the good cheer of the table was applauded even by its most renowned votaries, and altogether it was a season of much indulgence. The Duke's Secretary, Mr. Orde, (afterwards Lord Bolton,) was good-humoured, polite, and attended as much, perhaps more, to business than the delicacy of his health would always permit. As the Lord Lieutenant came in the midst of a session, some questions which had been introduced in the Earl of Northington's time, pursued their course. Among other matters it was proposed to give such a duty to some manufactures, and the materials of manufactures here, as would have produced a war of prohibitory duties between England and this country, had the proposition been adopted. The House of Commons rejected the scheme, as crude, indigested, and totally impolitic. But some intelligent men on both sides of the House thought, that some commercial system would be necessary, and it was agreed that such a system should be considered, and submitted to the House early the next session. Mr. Flood returned from England, and brought in another bill of Parliamentary Reform, which was not at all relished, even by

those who were very sincere advocates for that measure. It was consequently rejected.*

The failure of these two questions was, during the summer, fatal to the tranquillity of the metropolis. Every rational person must acknowledge, that if any favoured proposition is to be directly consigned to the disposal of the multitude, because it is not implicitly and instantly adopted by Parliament, misrule and anarchy must supersede all wise and salutary government. There is an eternal difference between the great body of the people, calmly and constitutionally adopting a great question, and particular, unauthorised bodies of men assembling capriciously together, and, by menace and uproar, attempting to force a rejected question on the legislature. It is the duty of the people to await with respect the solemn decisions of Parliament; but to raise a standard against Parliament for its first, or any vote on questions concerning the pro-

* It was during the debate on this Bill, that Lieutenant-General Sir John Doyle, now Governor of Guernsey, objected to any Parliamentary Reform in Ireland, as perfectly inconsistent, and insufficient, which excluded the Catholics. He was, as well as I recollect, the first who expressed his sentiments on this particular point in the House of Commons.

priety of which the most unbiassed persons may entertain a diversity of sentiments, is a species of conduct in which it is difficult to say whether guilt or madness most predominates. Yet such was the conduct of some persons in Dublin at this time. The city was thrown into violent confusion. The Duke of Rutland was, on his first appearance at the theatre, hooted and insulted, as if he had been a Verres, an ancient inveterate foe to the people. He was here not many weeks at that time. Some agitators wrote circular letters to the different Sheriffs, requiring them to elect persons to sit in a particular assembly, or another Parliament in fact, to be held in Dublin. Whatever objections might have been made to the mode in which Mr. Fitzgibbon, then Attorney-General, prosecuted the Sheriff of the county of Dublin, a worthy man, but who was so ill advised as to comply with this insane writ of sedition, no good member of a well-regulated community, can deny his suffrage to the spirit, and even wisdom, with which the Attorney acted upon that occasion. The meeting which the Sheriffs of the city of Dublin convened for the like purpose of an illegitimate election, was, by his timely admonition, dispersed, and the quiet of the state so far preserved. However his general system of politics may be disapproved, candour demands this tribute to his memory. Such

was the whirlwind of faction, and uproar, which the Duke of Rutland met almost on his entrance into the Viceroyalty. But he inherited the gallant spirit of his father, and rode out the storm. The rage of that storm was not however felt beyond the metropolis. It was the mischievous frenzy of the tribunes of the city, not the constitutional opposition of the leader of the country. Lord Charlemont was as this time reviewing his Volunteers. Had he been on the spot, his rebuke at the moment would have only confirmed, and extended audacity; and it was best perhaps, to show to the people, the feebleness and short existence of all commotion, originally set on by persons who are more willing to aspire to rebellion, than able to sustain, or to propagate it. In truth, the rulers of states themselves can alone afford permanent materials for rebellion to subsist on.

The Session of 1785 was very important; but this is not the place for its history, or that of the celebrated commercial propositions, which occupied almost the whole of it, and extended the sitting of Parliament to an unusual length. Those who read the Memoirs now before them with attention, (if such Memoirs are entitled to attention,) need scarcely be told, that on the 10th of August, 1785, the commercial pfopositions,

which had been returned, much altered by the British Parliament, were debated in the Irish House of Commons, with a spirit of freedom, liberal investigation, and eloquence by some, and great dexterity of argument and commercial knowledge by others, which reflect no small lustre on the talents and independence of Ireland. The opposition was indeed a minority, but a minority from numbers, property, and intellect, so entirely respectable, that Mr. Orde most wisely did not go beyond that day in the prosecution of his system. It was not renewed. But the subject cannot be departed from, without taking some notice, however imperfect, of the uncommon energy of reasoning, and sublimity of eloquence, which Mr. Grattan displayed. His audience, which had been long accustomed to his oratorial powers, was amazed; and those who had never heard him before, were lost in their admiration of such uncommon rhetorical excellence. This speech was, I think, the last great triumph of his genius in the House of Commons, and perhaps superior to all that preceded it. Some gentlemen who opposed him, manifested peculiar industry of research, and powers of understanding. Mr. Foster, Mr. Fitzgibbon, are chiefly to be distinguished. Lord Charlemont was particularly adverse to the

propositions, but, as is well known, they never reached the Upper House of Parliament.

Early in 1786, Lord Charlemont was placed in a situation as new as agreeable to him. He was elected President of that learned, and truly respectable body, the Irish academy, then incorporated under the auspices of his Majesty. The erudite and ingenious author of the preface to the first volume of the transactions of the Academy, has briefly, but clearly stated the causes which, till then, operated against the permanent establishment of any such learned society in Ireland. To cultivate literature, if disposition was sometimes wanting here, genius never was. Dissimilarity of habits, afterwards of religion between the descendants of the ancient inhabitants and the new comers, would, although direct hostility had ceased, check any cordial, general co-operation, even in those arts the most immediately necessary to the improvement of rising society; and science could only spring up, dubious and languid, during the short intervals of our repose from civic and religious contests. As the connection between the two countries became more firmly rooted, and rational society more advanced in both kingdoms, even our vicinity to England, as the author alluded

to justly observes, however it daily added to many a useful art, was, to a certain degree, injurious to literature in Ireland, as those who cultivated it most sedulously, would naturally look to a country, where it was more expanded, and its votaries more rewarded. As it was near to England, so was it remote from other countries; and that sequestered situation, which made Ireland, "l'Ultima Irlanda," as Tasso says, once the seat of undisturbed learning in the west, was now equally hostile to scientific improvement, except such as England imparted. For few enlightened foreigners ever visited this country. Physical, therefore, as well as moral causes, combated against us. Still however, the genius of the country was not torpid even at home, and it would gladly have come forth, at the bidding of such men as Molyneux, the associate of Locke and Sir William Petty, who, towards the close of Charles the Second's reign, endeavoured to establish a society here, on a foundation similar to that of the illustrious royal society in London:

"But war unsheath'd the sword, and purple gore
"Stained the fair silver of the limpid wave."*

* See some very elegant verses on the nuptials of his Majesty,

The arbitrary domination of Louis the Fourteenth, was opposed, and the rights of a free people were established on the banks of the Boyne; but science fled from such scenes, and the labours of philosophy were in vain. The society was no more heard of. From that day various, but private literary societies have appeared, and faded away in Dublin. Almost every one of them, as well as the present Royal Academy, arose under the parent wing of the University, as most of the original academicians belonged to that venerable seminary, or had the honour of receiving their education within its walls. May both long flourish!

The Irish academy "unites in one plan the three compartments of science, polite literature, and antiquities; whatever is pleasing, with whatever is useful; the advancement of speculative knowledge with the history of mankind; it makes provision for the capricious variations of literary pursuit, and embracing

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by Mr. Hussey Burgh, afterwards Lord Chief Baron, and written by him when a fellow commoner of Trinity College, Dublin; they were published with other congratulatory poems written on that occasion, by some of the young gentlemen or the University.

ing all the objects of rational enquiry, it secures the co-operation of the learned of every description.* When this respectable body placed Lord Charlemont in the chair, he did not regard it as a mere honorary distinction, to add to the solemn enumeration of his dignities at the Herald's office, and nothing to literature. Not one of the members attended the academy meetings oftener than he did; few so constantly. Those who were his contemporary academicians must long call to mind his urbanity, the graces of his conversation, and the variety of literary anecdote, ancient or modern, with which he amused, and indeed instructed them, during the intervals of their agreeable labours at the academy. In such labours he bore himself no inglorious part; and, in their first session, he favoured them with an essay, drawn from no common sources, in which he undertakes to prove, from an Italian author, Fazio Delli Uberti, a nobleman of Florence, who flourished not long after Dante, the antiquity of the woollen manufacture in Ireland.† It is recorded of some of

* See the preface to the Transactions of the Academy.

† The work, from a passage of which Lord Charlemont formed the materials of his essay, is an old Italian poem, called, Dittamondi. The first edition of it was printed at Vicenza, 1474.

our countrymen, that the severe blow which that manufacture sustained, somewhat more than a century ago, was owing to their boast of its extent and prosperous condition.* Had Lord Charlemont lived in those days, he would have defended its privileges with no less ardour as a senator, than in the present he traced its history with the ingenuity of a learned academician.

We must now attend him to the camp. The reviews of the Volunteers were continued as usual this year and the succeeding one. But he observes, in one of his letters, that they were not then of the same numbers as formerly. His solicitude with regard to this institution was the same; and if he continued the reviews, when the same reasons did not exist, or at least with diminished force, for such military exhibitions, as some years before, it was because he

* Mr. Hutchinson (Secretary of state for Ireland) says, that he more than once heard Lord Chancellor Bowes mention a conversation that he had with Sir Robert Walpole, on the subject of the woollen manufactory in Ireland; who assured him, that the restraints imposed on it by the English parliament, had at first taken their rise from the vauntings of several Irish gentlemen, of the great success of that manufacture in this Kingdom.—*See his Commercial Restrictions of Ireland.*

not only wished that a certain portion of the inhabitants of this country should be habituated to the use of arms, but well knew, (as has been often mentioned,) that if he relinquished the command of even this remnant of the volunteer bands, there were not then wanting some who would seize on it for purposes by no means so patriotic as his own. It was more wise therefore to suffer the Volunteers to fade away tacitly under his quiet, auspicious rule, than that they should receive ill-timed, or angry, orders from the Castle for their dispersion, which they not only would not have obeyed, but perhaps have recalled some of their former associates from their pacific, rural occupations, to engage in an unnecessary contest with government, which could have little redounded to the honour of either party, and most injuriously to the country. The following slight extracts are taken from two of his letters to Haliday, relating to the Belfast reviews, and his residence, during their continuance, at that gentleman's house.

"Dublin, May 31, 1787.

"You are perfectly right, my dearest doctor, to make a virtue of necessity, and to request that, which my military spirit would now prompt me to take as by a right prescription, having worn a

red coat long enough to imbibe some of its influence, at least so far as to endeavour where I have found good quarters, to make my quarters good. There was a time, when I was really ashamed to give you so much trouble, but those bashful days are now past, and I begin to think modesty degrading to a veteran as I am. I have indeed been robbed, but I am too good a patriot to repine at sharing the fate of my country."*

"Marino, July 21, 1787.

"No sooner are you rid of the trouble which always accompanies my presence, than the plague of my correspondence commences; neither do I now write to thank you for all your repeated kindnesses, as the common course of ceremony would seem to require. Ceremony, thank fate, cannot possibly have a place in our connection.

"I left my broken coach at Drogheda, and rattled on in a common chaise, which also broke down before my arrival. Fortune de la Guerre!"——Mr. Francis, now Sir Philip, visit-

* Charlemont House had been robbed, I believe, of some articles.

ed Ireland in the course of the summer, as appears from part of Mr. Burke's correspondence with Lord Charlemont, which relates to that gentleman, and, what was dear to Lord Charlemont's heart, a bust or likeness of his lost friend, the Marquis of Rockingham.

"Gerrard-street, June 1, 1787.

"My Dear Lord,

"I have an high respect for your Lordship of old, as I trust you know; and as I have the best wishes for my friend, Mr. Francis, I am exceedingly desirous that he should have an opportunity of paying his compliments to the person in Ireland the most worthy the acquaintance of a man of sense and virtue. Mr. Francis has not been in Ireland since the days of his childhood, but he has been employed in a manner that does honour to the country that has given him birth. When he sees your Lordship, he will perceive that ancient morals have not yet deserted at least that part of the world which he revisits, and you will be glad to receive for a while a citizen that has only left his country, to be the more extensively serviceable to mankind. May I beg your Lordship to make my most respectful and most affectionate compliments, and those of Mrs. Burke, and my son, and all that

are of our little family, to Lady Charlemont. I hope that Mr. Francis will bring back such an account of the health of your Lordship, and all your's, as may make us happy.

"I have the honour to be,
"My dear Lord,
"With the most cordial attachment,
"Your most affectionate and obliged friend,
"And faithful servant,
"EDM. BURKE."

"Beaconsfield, July 19, 1787.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"Mr. Francis called upon me in his way to his own house, charmed, as I expected he would be, with your character and conversation, and infinitely obliged by your reception of him. Give me leave to convey his thanks to you, and to add mine to them.—Every motive induces me to wish your house provided with all the ornaments that are worthy of it; the bust you desire is that which is most essential, and that in which you combine your taste, your friendship, and your principles. When I go to town, I shall see Mr. Nollekens, and hasten him as much as I can; there was no bust taken from Lord Rockingham during his life time. This is made from a masque taken from his face after

his death, and of course must want that animation which I am afraid can never be given to it, without hazarding the ground work of the features. Tassie has made a profile in his glass, which is, I think, the best likeness, I mean uncoloured likeness, which exists. I will recommend it to Nollekens; perhaps he may make some advantage of it; though I have observed that artists seldom endeavour to profit of each other's works, though not in the exact line which they profess.

"Believe me, with the most cordial affection,

"My dear Lord, your Lordship's

"Most faithful, and obliged humble servant,

"EDM. BURKE."

Lord Charlemont's days, at this time, passed away in general tranquillity. The country was, with some very slight interruptions, quiet and composed. It advanced fast in prosperity. The commercial propositions had occasioned no small ferment; but as they were timely withdrawn, that ferment subsided. They occasioned however a schism, and division in the House of Commons, which, till that question was agitated, the House had not known during the Duke's administration. The opposition, however, was very inconsiderable, as to other questions, and

conducted without acrimony, much less malevolence. On Mr. Forbes's pension bill, when first introduced, the minority did not exceed 26, or thereabouts. That question, however, took place before the celebrated one of the propositions, and after the *last*-mentioned debate, no question was discussed of the slightest importance, except that which related to the police establishment of the city of Dublin. Some members carried on what was then termed, and justly, a *Petite Guerre*, or inconsiderable parliamentary warfare, against government. The phrase was adopted by some of the leaders of the Opposition themselves, to express their dislike of such insignificant, though sometimes irritating proceedings, and *they* of course took no part in them.

Some time after the close of the session of 1787, the Duke of Rutland visited the north of Ireland. He was magnificently received by the Marquis of Downshire, the Earl of Moira, and some other noblemen and gentlemen. Belfast displayed great loyalty and hospitality on this occasion, and made a most superb entertainment for his Grace, which, as I remember, seemed to afford him much satisfaction. When the memory of Lord Russell was given as a toast,

he arose, and with a warmth of feeling, which it was impossible not to partake of, said that he was truly flattered by the memory of that excellent person being then drank, not only as Lord Russell's political principles were his own, but he prided himself, and such pride of ancestry he hoped was laudable, on being that great patriot's immediate descendant. One circumstance relative to the Duke, during this tour, I shall take leave to mention, however trivial, as it eminently shows the miserable uncertainty, and emptiness of human expectation. As he walked up and down the noble library at Lord Moira's, some gentlemen, as I well recollect, took notice to each other of the remarkable compactness, and strength of his frame, which seemed to indicate great health, and peculiar longe vity. But a fever, the consequence of too much conviviality, must have begun, even then, to undermine him, and immediately after his return to Dublin, closed his days in the very summer of life, and the midst of worldly grandeur. He was somewhat more than three and thirty. He died greatly regretted; by his own domestics, friends, and connections particularly so; and the funeral ceremonial which attended his remains from the chamber, adjoining the House of Lords, where they lay in state, to the water

side, did honour to the taste and feelings of those who planned it. As a procession it was perhaps unrivalled; but the silent, and decorous sorrow of the multitudes that witnessed it, diffused an affecting grace and soothing solemnity over every object, beyond the reach of the most refined pageantry.

The Marquis of Buckingham (formerly Earl Temple) was appointed successor to the much-lamented Duke, and Lords Justices were nominated till his arrival. When he came once more to Dublin, as Lord Lieutenant, the people seemed to vie with each other in giving him welcome. Lord Charlemont went again to the Castle, which he had not visited after the debate on the famous propositions, and perhaps not often before. But he always mentioned the Duke of Rutland with respect, and even tenderness. His letters to Haliday will best speak his sentiments at this juncture,

"Dublin, January 4, 1788.

"——Now to answer seriously the question you have so comically put. It is most true that, during the late administration, I seldom attended the Privy Council, because I did not chuse to assist at measures which I disapproved,

and could not oppose with any possibility of effect. It is also true, as reported by the news printers, who do me a most unmerited honour in giving importance to an occurrence so perfectly trifling, that, since the arrival of our new Viceroy, I have some time attended at council, because there was a probability that the abovementioned reason might no longer exist, and because it is a maxim with me, that every new Lord Lieutenant should be well received, and narrowly watched. The Marquis of Buckingham certainly merited a good reception. During the short time he was here, his attention to business was miraculous, and its effects began already to be felt. Defaulters were ferreted out of their most secret holes, and there was every reason to hope, that had his administration lasted, the honey of our hive would have been no longer a prey to drones and wasps. A surgeon's aid was necessary, and we had reason to expect, from our present operator, skill, care, and boldness. So far for his reception; which, however, I am free to confess, was in my opinion, too extravagant. Respecting his future administration, time alone can discover its tendency. I have however no reason to think that he means any harm. But, from what I have said, you will readily conclude, that I, for my own part, keep

myself clear from, in any degree, pledging connection, and that while I give no peevish opposition, from which indeed I have ever been averse, I am ready upon any occasion to oppose strenuously. If Lord Buckingham comes over, unincumbered by any project, he will make an excellent Lord Lieutenant."

This administration did, in fact, move on with almost unexampled tranquillity. The Viceroy was most laudably employed, as Lord Charlemont justly observed, in correcting some of the many abuses which had crept into the public offices, an Herculean labour! and the obliging manners, and honourable conduct of his secretary, Mr. Fitzherbert,* were held in universal estimation. So remarkably calm indeed was the session of 1788, so unruffled by any thing like violent parliamentary contests, that, as it is often the hard fate of unostentatious goodness to be denominated stupid, this session was by some exclaimed against, as intolerably dull, and uninteresting, because it was not distinguished by any impassioned debate, or violent hostility of party. There was one class of men to whom, I can well

* Now Lord St. Helens.

remember, it appeared of the most lamentable nature, and the continuance of such inauspicious serenity was, by them, deprecated with an unfeigned, and truly piteous fervour. Their distress was indeed ridiculous, as the cause of it could not be openly declared, though it was generally known. The fact was, they were not employed, their suffrages were not called for, and in proportion to the paucity, of what may be called tormenting questions, in the House of Commons, the pretences of besieging Lord Buckingham, or Mr. Fitzherbert for offices were diminished. This session, therefore, to them was a session of parliamentary famine, and the opposition was tacitly accused of starving them, because no question was brought forward, which could display the hardihood of those gentlemen in debate, or their impatience for the rewards of that hardihood at the Castle.* The charge, therefore, against the

* Such secret lamentations among some of the minor statesmen, and ministerial members, were not confined to the period I allude to. Many years preceding it, a gentleman mentioned, in the course of his speech in the House of Commons, that a person, who always voted with government, and when he spoke, constantly insulted the opposition on account of the thinness of their ranks, was observed one night, when the minority was going into the lobby on a division, to stand near a friend of his,

opposition, differed totally from the general accusations preferred against them. They were not said to endanger public tranquillity, but they gave no unnecessary molestation to government, and were therefore guilty, according to some persons, of the most inexpiable crime.

Thus matters stood at the close of the session of 1788, which was as limited as tranquil. On the 16th of July, Lord Charlemont revisited Belfast as usual, and once more reviewed the volunteer army. The review was not attended by any thing novel or uncommon. But the county of Armagh, of which Lord Charlemont was governor, was at this time the scene of sanguinary outrage and religious discord. All this contention is said to have arisen from an accidental quarrel between two Presbyterians, in which a Roman Catholic espoused one of the parties. This idle fray was productive of much rancour where they resided, and a contemptible village warfare gradually expanded itself into hostilities, which pervaded the whole, or most

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who composed part of that minority, and with great earnestness exclaimed to him; "The Lord increase your questions, the Lord increase your numbers, I shall never be a commissioner of the revenue, or any thing else at this rate."

part of the county. One half of the infuriated contests, which set kingdom against kingdom, and in proportion as they rise in absurdity and horror, are decorated with all the gaudy epithets which the lyric, the tragic, or epic muse can bestow on them, have not often a more honourable origin. The Protestant, or Presbyterian parties were denominated Peep of Day Boys, as they often visited the houses of the Catholics at break of day, to search for arms; and the latter were styled Defenders. Much blood was shed on both sides. Lord Charlemont proceeded from belfast to Armagh, and endeavoured, as far as in his power, to restore tranquillity. "The situation," says he, writing to Dr. Haliday,* "in which I found the county of Armagh, has given me much uneasiness. I have, however, laboured to pacify all sides, and to allay that rancorous hate which existed between the parties. My labours, I trust, have had the desired effect; and I have reason to believe that all disturbance is now at an end. How strange is the inconstancy of the people. A few years ago I was compelled to hazard all my popularity to prevent the protestants from ruining themselves

* Dublin, August 1, 1788.

and their country, by giving up all to the Catholics; and now I am forced to a risque of the same popularity, to prevent them from cutting each others throats." All disturbance, however, was not at an end. His Lordship's benign interposition at this time, produced only a temporary suspension of wretched hostility, which, as I shall have occasion perhaps to state hereafter, broke out again with increased fury, and was productive of the most unhappy effects.

From this time till the winter, Lord Charlemont continued either in town, or at Marino,* enjoying the society of his friends, or engaged in literary occupations. His house was uniformly open to all who had any claim on his attention, either from similarity of constitutional principles, or their cultivation of those pleasing and liberal studies which, in general, employed his mind, and were his most agreeable, though too often, only momentary refuge. Every foreigner, of taste congenial to his own, and every Englishman of rank and talents, visited him during their occasional residence in Dublin. Among those who became known to him at this

* His elegant villa, near Dublin.

time, was Mr. Cholmondeley, the friend of Doctor Johnson, now (1804) Chief Commissioner of the Customs. "I am happy," thus he writes to his friend Haliday, Sept. 20th, 1788; "that you saw Cholmondeley, and that he saw you. Upon so short an acquaintance I never yet liked any man more, and therefore hear with pleasure, that he did not disapprove of my reception." It may not be improper to state here, what Mr. Burke once said to me of this accomplished nobleman: "Lord Charlemont is a man of such polished manners, of a mind so truly adorned, and disposed to the adoption of whatever is excellent and praise-worthy, that, to see and converse with him, would alone induce me, or might induce any one who relished such qualities, to pay a visit to Dublin."

Towards the approach of winter, an event the most melancholy, and fraught with consequences the most important to the well-being of these kingdoms, took place in England. His Majesty, (so it pleased Providence,) was seized with a malady peculiarly grievous and afflicting. The grief which spread through every class of his subjects, when the nature of the disorder was more fully ascertained and unequivocally declared, cannot be described in terms sufficiently

adequate. For several weeks all was anxiety and sorrow, and every one looked to the meeting of Parliament with the most heart-felt impatience. The two Houses met at Westminster on the 20th of November, 1788, when they unanimously adjourned to the 4th of December. The physicians who attended his Majesty were, in the mean time, examined before the Privy Council, who all agreed, as to his utter inability to meet Parliament, of the uncertain duration of his complaint, and the probability that, in time, it would be removed. On the 4th of December the Houses met again, when the minutes of the Privy Council were read, and Monday the 8th was fixed on for taking them into consideration. Committees of both Houses were on that day appointed to examine the physicians. They brought up their report on the 10th, when Mr. Pitt moved, "That a committee be appointed to examine the journals of the House, and report precedents of such proceedings as may have been had in cases of the personal exercise of the royal authority being prevented or interrupted by infancy, sickness, infirmity, or otherwise, with a view to provide for the same." This resolution was objected to by Mr. Fox, as only tending to create delay. That there was then an Heir Apparent to the Crown, of full age

and understanding, and in his, Mr. Fox's opinion, it was clear that, during the suspension of the exercise of the royal authority from incapacity, the Heir Apparent, situated as the Prince of Wales then was, had as just a claim to the exercise of kingly power, during such incapacity, as if the Crown had naturally demised. This position Mr. Pitt utterly denied, and in a lofty tone declared, "That to advance such a claim or right in the Prince, or any one, without the concurrence of both Houses of Parliament, was a species of treason to the Constitution."

It is not the part of such a work as this, to detail or enter into the debates which arose in the British Parliament on this important question; a question, as will appear hereafter, of the deepest concernment to Ireland. Suffice it to state here, that, notwithstanding the Prince did not advance any claim, and that a large party in both Houses, in conjunction with the Dukes of York and Gloucester, who delivered their sentiments on this occasion, deprecated the discussion of any such question, it was brought forward, and the exclusive right of both Houses of Parliament to supply the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority, was asserted by considerable majorities. The proceedings

subsequent to this business, Mr. Pitt's letter to the Prince of Wales, the answer of his Royal Highness, in every respect so dignified and so becoming;* his nomination to the Regency, with the limitations and restrictions annexed to the discharge of that high trust, are all amply detailed elsewhere. They are necessarily touched on here, as leading to, and forming a considerable part of that great business of the Regency, which called forth the powers of the Irish Parliament, and in whose proceedings Lord Charlemont took such an honourable and conspicuous a part. The meeting of the Irish Legislature was deferred as long as it could possibly be. Every effort was made to secure a majority for Government, and in vain. Most of the gentlemen who had always voted with opposition, and many who, on this occasion, left the Viceroy, proposed to Lord Charlemont to call a general meeting of such as were adverse to the proceedings in the British Parliament. A large party therefore of the Members of both Houses, met at Charlemont-House, on the 3d of Febru-

* It is admirably written, and, independent of the just and constitutional sentiments which it breathes, deserves almost to be studied as a composition.

ary, 1789. In two days after, the session was at length opened by Lord Buckingham. The speech was necessarily short; it mentioned the King's illness in the most proper and dutiful terms, and concluded with declaring his Excellency's confidence in that affectionate attachment to his Majesty, and zealous concern for the united interests of both kingdoms which had manifested itself in all their proceedings. The first division in the House of Commons sufficiently displayed the temper of that assembly, and the faint prospect of their proceedings on this occasion being studiously assimilated to those of the British Parliament. The Secretary (Mr. Fitzherbert) moved, that the House should go into a committee, to take the state of the nation into consideration, on Monday the 16th of February. Instead of that day, Wednesday the 11th was proposed by Mr. Grattan, and carried by a majority of 54; the numbers being 128 to 74. The same preponderance against administration prevailed in the House of Lords.

The Houses met accordingly on the 11th. On the part of administration it was proposed, that they should wait the proceedings of the British Parliament, and the complete investiture of the Prince of Wales as Regent; that they

should proceed by bringing in a bill to recognize him as Regent here, and not by address; that nothing could be effectually or legally done, until it was ascertained in whose hands the Great Seal of England was, as by the act, generally called Lord Chief Baron Yelverton's Act, the Great Seal was rendered necessary to the passing any Irish law; so much so, that if the King of England was here in person, he could not give his assent to any Irish bill, till it had been returned to Ireland under the Great Seal of England; that this was the bond of union and connection with Great Britain; that the regent of England might, when in possession of that instrument, and perhaps would, supersede any regent made by the Parliament of Ireland; that the 23d of Henry 8th, for ever annexed the Crown of Ireland to that of England; it was made on a particular occasion; when the house of Fitzgerald, and the House of Butler, espousing different parties, had plunged Ireland into civil commotion; that this act did not apply merely to the Monarch, or the person who wore the crown, but to whoever was in possession of the executive power in England; that the chief executive magistrate in England, and Ireland, should be one and the same person, or in other words, the Regent of England was, in every respect,

the Regent of Ireland; that the address of the two Houses conferred no power; and that, to proceed in any other manner than that now proposed, would tend to a separation from, and complete disunion with England.

These were the leading points adduced by Lord Buckingham's Ministry, chiefly indeed by Mr. Fitzgibbon, then Attorney-General, and were sustained by him with no ordinary ability.

On the other side, it was answered; that to proceed by bringing in a bill, was on the supposition, that there was then a third person in a capacity to act; but by address it was proposed to make an efficient third estate, in order to legislate; that the address then to be moved, was copied from an address voted by the Convention Parliament to the Prince of Orange, desiring him to take on himself the conduct of public affairs, which address was afterwards followed by a bill giving to the whole the form of law, and so it was intended to proceed in the case before them; that there were some points in which the revolution was like the present period; in others it was different; the throne was then vacant, at present it was filled; but as in both cases there was a suspension of the royal authority, it was the duty of

the two Houses, as at the Revolution, to restore immediately the exercise of the Regal power; an address, therefore, was the most direct mode of doing so; the necessity was urgent, protection was the source of allegiance; that resorting to the Great Seal of England was, for obvious reasons, inexpedient; if they could not appoint a Regent by an Act of Parliament directly, they ought not to do it fictitiously; that the present situation of the country did not appear to have been in the contemplation of the legislature of either country, at any period; that the great object of the chief Baron's bill, which had been held out *in terrorem* to the two Houses of Parliament, was to prevent the alteration of bills by the Privy Council; that it was denied, that the King of England, if at the Castle of Dublin, could not give the royal assent. The Great Seal of England would not then be necessary as a sign of his approbation; that, if the address of the two Houses on such an emergency could convey no power, then the two Houses of Parliament in England, could convey no power to the Prince of Orange. But did they not call him to take upon himself the direction of public affairs, though they positively at that moment declared, that the throne was not vacant? What then became of the assertion, that the Prince of Wales

could not act on such powers? He would act under the only powers competent to call him to the government; he therefore not only had a right, but ought to act. If the two Houses of the British Parliament claimed such powers, the Irish, being equally independent, might claim similar privileges. The act of Henry the 8th annexing the crown of Ireland to that of England, did not apply to the present question, unless it was affirmed, that the Regency of Ireland was inseparably annexed to that of England, which no one would venture to affirm. The act of Henry the 8th set forth the reason of its being made, in order to raise in the mind of the people the authority of the Lord thereof; the Lordship was created into an imperial crown, annexed to, not merged in that of Great Britain; but annexation was here attempted to be melted down into dependence, and dependence into extinction.—The connection was said to be in danger. How? By resorting to the line of succession. To the Heir apparent with irresistible claims, and the *already* declared choice of Great Britain. Was it by giving him full regal authority? All limitations, all restrictions were given up, even by the ministry, or its leader in Ireland, as totally unnecessary here. It was impossible therefore, though both Houses of the Irish par-

liament wished it, that the mode of proceedings should be precisely the same. They were accused of precipitancy. How? By appointing the Prince Regent, at this day, some months after the royal indisposition, after the first meeting of the British Parliament on this unhappy business; nay, after his Royal Highness had accepted the regency;* as, to make use of his own words, the safety and interests of the people must be endangered by a long suspension of the exercise of the royal authority. But the resolutions of the British Parliament, in fact, declare that any person whatever is equally eligible with the Prince, as Regent. If, therefore, instead of the Royal Family wearing the Irish Crown, the people are directed to contemplate, as the object of their affection, an officer with the Great Seal in his hand, will the advocate for such doctrine answer for the affections of his Majesty's subjects of Ireland? If, according to that resolution, England would chuse, not the Prince of Wales but another person Regent, England would first go astray, and then accuse Ireland of promoting dis-

* See his answer, on the 30th of January, 1789, to the committees of both Houses.

union. But, as both Parliaments concurred in the great object, the Regent, Ireland was not, nor could be, committed with England. No reflection was meant to be cast on the wisdom of the British Parliament, or its measures, and the deliberations of the two Countries were governed by their respective circumstances.

Such were the arguments, in substance at least, which were used on this momentous question. To some the detail may appear tedious; but the whole proceedings of this singular period are closely interwoven with the history of Lord Charlemont, and they derive even a superior interest from this consideration, that the Parliament which so acted is now no more; and that its resolutions on this occasion were, in the short space of ten, or eleven years afterwards, the principal cause of its annihilation; or, if some do not like that phrase, of its being shorn of its beams, by the total extinction of two hundred of its members. It was accused then, as in 1789, of indiscretion, of precipitancy, of a wish to involve the two kingdoms in confusion and civil discord, with this additional mortification, that some who supported parliament on this very question, tacitly

acquiesced in the censures passed in 1799 on their proceedings, whilst others disdained all such taciturnity, and nobly condemned their own acts, for the purposes of their own exaltation. But on the conduct of the Irish Senate, at the critical juncture of 1789, let posterity, not those who were busy actors in the scene, or interested cotemporaries, alone decide. That a difference, or even the prospect of a difference, between two Independent Parliaments, affecting the very being of these countries, should be the most cogent argument for the consolidation of both legislatures, I perfectly agree to; but conceding this, and even the absolute necessity of a legislative union, where mutual adhesion is otherwise found utterly or nearly* impracticable, it is not perhaps perfectly clear to every one, that the behaviour of the Irish Parliament on this memorable occasion, furnished an argument entirely conducive, in favour of such a junction. If there was any essential difference between the two legislatures, and in fact there was not; but if there was, it displayed itself in one singular, solitary instance only, whilst the journals of the

* As in the union with Scotland, when Lord Somers, the great promoter of that measure, was afraid, and justly, that the Scotch Parliament might differ totally from the Parliament of England as to the succession of the House of Hanover.

Irish Legislature, for a century, present an almost unvaried assimilation of its proceedings, as to the succession to the Throne, to those of the British Parliament. Let any one read the speeches of the different Viceroys from the Revolution to 1800. All is harmony, all good humour. The Parliament is thanked, by the successive Sovereigns for good and loyal conduct, and attachment to England. In king William's time, certainly, Lord Sidney entered his protest against the proceedings of the House of Commons as to a money bill, so did the Marquis Townshend, as has been already mentioned; but this was a quarrel with one branch of the Irish legislature merely. In the reign of George the First, the House of Lords, in Ireland, asserted their claim to the appellant jurisdiction; but the British Peers (such was the utter imbecility of our nobility, and, indeed of Ireland at the time) bore them down, and, till 1782, removed the final judgment-seat to themselves. But there was no clash, no conflict of legislatures, on the occasion; and if there had been, in the present instance, as I have already stated, is it at all certain that the Irish Parliament was in the wrong? Far from it, in my opinion. The Union is not the question here, but the conduct of Lord Charlemont, and other honourable men who co-

operated with him at this trying period, of the two Houses in Ireland in short; many of the members of which were undoubtedly influenced by his example.

There were then two contending parties in England, one in the possession of power and afraid of losing it, the other, entertaining just expectation that, at no very distant period, they would be restored to it; but this could not be accomplished without a violent struggle. The consequences of that struggle, as of every political contention in England, were soon felt in Ireland; it has been always the case, and ever will, though the floor of the Irish House of Commons is no longer trod upon. The great object of the ministerial party, at that time, was delay; the most obvious reasons suggested such a course. It so happened, that whilst pursuing that course, and every moment most tremblingly anxious for their official existence, an assertion of Mr. Fox's (in my opinion a perfectly just one, as he explained it) was instantaneously seized on with peculiar adroitness and parliamentary management, and not only furnished more grounds for procrastination, but was so contrived, as to throw an odium on the Opposition, and give a transient splendour to the Minister, as maintain-

ing the rights of the people in Parliament against the claim supposed to be advanced by the adherents to the Prince of Wales. The memorable resolution passed on this occasion, and already taken notice of, had much influence in Ireland. No one felt more sensibly than Lord Charlemont did, the possible dangers which might result from a resolution, which left the royalty of the Prince so unguarded, and so inefficient, as opposed to the claims of an over-vaulting popular ambition. Though no such ambition might then display itself, who could answer for the vicissitudes of opinion, or the irregularity of malignant passions, fed and nourished by such a resolution, and operating in a country so divided as Ireland. Never therefore did any proceeding more completely unite the affections and suffrages of many independent members of the Irish House of Commons, than this vote with regard to the supposed claims of the Prince of Wales. It certainly was one of the principal causes for accelerating matters in Parliament here, and giving the regency at once to his Royal Highness. To say that ambition, the hopes of aggrandizement, of emolument, did not intermingle themselves with this great question, and change the conduct of several, would be, not only to state an untruth,

but an untruth of the most puerile kind. Far be it from me to conceal, were it even in my power, the sad venality, and unblushing revolt of some Irish Senators,* on this occasion; the cabals, the morning, the midnight assemblies of ridiculous personages, now jocund, now woe-be-gone, crowding the Castle, the lobby of the House of Commons, assailing every person of consequence or no consequence in the streets, who happened to have a letter in their hands, the Peer, or the Postman, the Printer, or the Privy Councellor, anxious for, and hanging their timid, and fluctuating votes, on the arrival of every pacquet, and every bulletin from England. Now the tides began to swell on the ministerial side of the House; now they were lower again, according to the truth, or the lies, the absurd rumour, the mingled, and varying intelligence of the hour. Like the Bourgeois Gentilhomme of Moliere, who had read prose without knowing that he did so, those gentlemen had acquired in one respect the sagacity of Cromwell's Embassador,† unconscious of any such intellectual visitation, and were, if possi-

*I fancy that we were not singular; towards the *close* of this question, at least, scenes, nearly similar, were acted at Westminster.

† Lockhart.

ble, more the humble servants of events, than he ever was. Then were speeches made, and voices heard, which never were heard before in the House. One would imagine, that the statue of Memnon had been put into commission, that one image had been multiplied into several, all for the first time animated, and all alone vocal to the rising Sun.

Such auxiliaries as I have now described, acted undoubtedly with Lord Charlemont and his friends; and where is the party or association of men, many of whom have not been influenced by similar motives? But it is equally certain, that the majority of the independent part of the House, and some of its most constitutional Statesmen, and lawyers, were cordially attached to, and effectually supported, the system pursued in favour of the Prince of Wales. Not to add that there were many gentlemen of principle, and fortune, on the other side, would be to falsify history; and several members who had always voted, or in general, with Government, did not desert their ranks in that hour of peril, but generously supported an administration which almost every one then considered, as advancing rapidly to the last scene of its existence. It is to be presumed, that the

understandings of those gentlemen co-operated with their feelings, for though not to desert a sinking friend must ever be applauded; to follow any administration, or opposition, from motives merely personal, however constantly practised, cannot be justly reconciled to genuine parliamentary rectitude.

The principal opponent of administration on this question, in the House of Commons, was Mr. Grattan; but he was supported with great ability by the Secretary of State, (Mr. Hutchinson,) Mr. Charles O'Neil, a very eminent lawyer, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Curran, and Mr. Arthur Browne. The same line was pursued by Lord Charlemont, and those who acted with him. The Duke of Leinster, the Earl of Granard, the Earl of Moira, Lord Donoughmore, in the Upper House. On this occasion, Lord Charlemont moved the address to the Prince of Wales, requesting his Royal Highness to take upon himself the Government of Ireland, with the style and title of Prince Regent, and in the name and behalf of his Majesty to exercise all regal powers, during his Majesty's indisposition, and no longer.* On

* On Lord Charlemont's motion for this address, the contents were 45, and the non-contents 26.

the 19th February, 1789, both Houses waited on Lord Buckingham with their address to the Prince which his Excellency refused to transmit, as inconsistent with his oath as Lord Lieutenant; and further stated, that he could not consider himself warranted to lay before the Prince an address, purporting to invest his Royal Highness with powers to take on him the government of Ireland, till he was enabled by law so to do.

The consequence of this refusal, (for which a vote of censure on the Lord Lieutenant passed both Houses)* was, that the Commons appointed four of their members, and the Lords two of theirs, to wait on his Royal Highness with the address. The gentlemen deputed by the House of Commons were of the highest rank and respectability; Mr. O'Neal, Mr. Connoly, Mr. William Ponsonby, and Mr. James Stewart.† The Duke of Leinster, and Lord

* It is to be observed, that several of the Lords and Commons who voted against Lord Buckingham's administration, in the general business of the regency, opposed this resolution of censure.

† They were all members for Counties, and, except Mr. Stewart, Privy Counsellors. Mr. Stewart is now, 1807, the sole survivor of the entire deputation.

Charlemont were appointed by the Lords. Lord Charlemont, therefore, accompanied by the Duke, and the above-mentioned gentlemen, went to England directly. Every one knows how this mission terminated; that it pleased God to restore our Sovereign to perfect health, and of course all proceedings, as to a regency, were entirely suspended in both kingdoms. It is no adulation, but strict historical justice to state, that the urbanity and good sense of his Royal Highness were never more conspicuous than on this occasion. To all the deputies he paid attentions the most delicate and flattering; he particularly distinguished our good and venerable Earl, who, whenever an opportunity permitted, never failed to speak of his Royal Highness with the utmost fervor of affection and gratitude, of the perfect propriety of his behaviour at this arduous moment, his knowledge of mankind, and that fascinating politeness and good breeding which, accustomed as Lord Charlemont had been to the refined society of some of the most accomplished men in Europe, he often declared that he had seldom seen equalled, and never surpassed. To this it must be added, that his Royal Highness's expressions of regard for the Irish Parliament, and people, were the most conciliating, the best calculated

to leave on their minds an impression the most pleasing, and to close this important and interesting scene with temper, with dignity, and unaffected benevolence. Happy had it been for both countries, if the same moderation, and benign healing disposition, had been manifested in the general deportment and language of many of the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland, not only at this, but at a subsequent period. On the contrary, a spirit of jealousy and rancour seemed to have arisen from the agitation of this question, which, though controlled for several years, displayed itself once more in 1799, and, under the thin disguise of affected regard for the connection of both kingdoms, shewed, by its querulous phrase, and temerity of misrepresentation, that the conduct of the Irish Legislature, at this period, had never been, for one moment, consigned to oblivion.

This tempestuous and ever memorable session closed the 25th of May. Lord Lifford, the Chancellor of Ireland, died in the month of July following. Before his promotion to the great seals of this kingdom, in 1767, he had been one of the Judges of the King's Bench, in England, and owed his elevation to Lord Camden, who was always firmly attached to him. He

was esteemed an excellent lawyer, an impartial judge, and his patience and good temper on the bench were exemplary. After some negotiation, Mr. Fitzgibbon, the Attorney-general, succeeded him; his exertions during the regency question had been so great, and, fortunately for him, so recent, that every difficulty, as to his promotion, vanished before them. Mr. Fitzherbert, a most amiable man, whose habits and knowledge were more suited to foreign diplomacy than the management of the House of Commons, relinquished his situation as Secretary, and was succeeded by Mr. Hobart,* now Earl of Buckinghamshire. Some time after, the Viceroy himself left Ireland. As a statesman, he was not generally relished; but he had many personal friends, and deserved to have them, from his steady, undeviating patronage. Never was a lady in her high situation more the object of affectionate respect and veneration than the Marchioness of Buckingham; her father, Lord Nugent, so well known at Westminster and Dublin, was an Irishman; he cultivated literature not unsuccessfully, had agreeable talents for poetry, and, what is of far

* 1805.

more consequence, and I am sorry to add, far more uncommon, he loved his own country, and on all occasions promoted its interests. Lords Justices were appointed in the room of the Marquis of Buckingham, and he was finally replaced by the Earl of Westmoreland. Many who had opposed government to the late melancholy occasion, had quietly fallen back, long before this, into their old situation; but some great and leading connections would, on no account, coalesce with Lord Buckingham, or his successor. An amnesty had been offered some time after the close of the regency question, with what peculiar terms accompanied I know not, but by those connections it was rejected. Several were dismissed from their official situations;—Mr. Ponsonby, as Postmaster-general, his brother, Mr. George Ponsonby, the Duke of Leinster, and many of their friends and adherents. Thus was gradually formed an Opposition, which, in point of numbers, of talents, and general respectability, was the most formidable that had been encountered by the Irish Administration for many years.

Lord Charlemont's health at this time was by no means good; he describes himself, in a letter to his friend Haliday, as sick of many griefs,

public and private.* "My nerves, the constant source of all my complaints, are much affected, and, consequently, neither my eyes nor my spirits are as they ought to be. The horrid weather, which I take to be unparalleled, may possibly contribute to produce these effects in me; but what alteration in the weather can produce any good effect on those wretches in the county of Armagh? Few things have ever given me so much concern and anxiety as these nasty broils. The fools will undo themselves, and I cannot help it. I am sorry to add to these causes of discontent the politics of my Belfast friends. Here, however, the case is by no means desperate, since, I am persuaded, their good sense must bring them back to a right way of thinking, and those principles, which seemed to be a part of their nature, must resume their empire.—In other respects, however, matters go on tolerably well. The party is determined and firm, neither do I think it possible, that any farther impression can be made by all the arts and powers of Administration. I have forwarded the institution of a Whig Club, upon the most constitutional principles, which will certainly be of great use.

* Letter from Marino, June 14th, 1789.

"It now rains as if it was just beginning, and I have twenty acres of meadow cut; and what is worse, it is so dark, that I must conclude my letter. For Heaven's sake! be incessant in preaching Whig principles. Farewell! Excuse this languid letter, and believe me ever unceasingly, that is to say, while I am a Whig, your faithful friend, and truly affectionate, "C."

Notwithstanding his indifferent state of health, and variety of his engagements, he was no less assiduous in forming the literary than the political character of his country; he attended constantly the meetings of the Irish Academy, and, this year, furnished that learned body with a short, but elegant, and erudite essay on a most singular custom which prevails in Metelin, the ancient Lesbos, where his Lordship had formerly resided for some time.—It seems the eldest daughter inherits there, to the almost entire exclusion of the rest of her family. For beauty and amenity he gives Lesbos the preference to all the Greek islands on the Asiatic side of the Egean Sea; and speaks, (as what man of genius would not) with a very pardonable enthusiasm, of an island so celebrated in ancient story, which had listened to the earliest and most ani-

mating strains of the Lyric Muse, to Sappho and to Alcæus.

From Lesbos and Alcaic song to Belfast, Armagh, and the Whig Club, is, I confess, a transition not the most brilliant; but we must follow Lord Charlemont as he alternately pursues literature or politics; and, indeed, it is impossible not to respect a man who was so unceasingly solicitous for the real constitutional liberty and honourable tranquillity of his country;—other characters may be more brilliant, but I know of none more entitled to our affectionate veneration.

He was very anxious, and from the most patriotic motives, that a political club should be established in Belfast, the inhabitants of which he truly loved, and who, indeed, were worthy of his attention, from their general knowledge, their public spirit, and the animation which pervaded all their undertakings, whether commercial or political; but their spirits, as he conceived, was tinctured with something of republicanism; and in a town so circumstanced as that was, from its opulence and superior acquirements, extending its influence over no small portion of the North of Ireland, he wished that the old revolution, not de-

mocratic, principles, should prevail, and be generally acknowledged. "I really think," thus he writes,* "that an institution of this kind, (a Whig, or Constitutional Club) would, by holding out a congregation to the true believers at Belfast, be a means of fixing, and even re-calling, many, who might otherwise wander from the faith."

His ingenious and respectable friend, Haliday, who was of the genuine Whig school, adopted warmly his Lordship's ideas on this subject, as appears from the following letter:†

"Though I have but a moment, I cannot omit assuring you of the heartfelt joy which your letter has afforded me. My love for my country, —my ardour in the good cause which now occupies me,—and though last, not least, my affection for Belfast, are all gratified by the account you send me. Your sketch, as you chuse to call it, like a sketch of Raphael, is, from its outline, spirit, and animation, more valuable, perhaps, than a more finished picture would be, even by the same hand; to attempt a correction

* Letter to Dr. Haliday, (Extract from) Dublin, December 4th, 1789.

† Letter to Dr. Haliday, Dublin, February 20th, 1790.

would be to spoil it. Heaven bless you, my dear friend, go on and prosper, continue your patriotic efforts, and Belfast will again be what she was, what she ought to be. Excuse my haste, and believe me ever, unalterably your's."

The club was formed after some modification of their resolutions, in which he says, "he finds, with much concern, that Haliday's effectual and moderate draught had been, in some instances, departed from." However, matters were explained to his satisfaction; a re-perusal of them shewed, that a clause which he wished to be adopted, had been so already, and his Lordship's name was enrolled among the members of the society. Whilst he was thus constitutionally and wisely employed, some of the Castle adherents insisted, in all companies, that he was diffusing anarchy, and a spirit of resistance to all government; and one person said, that Haliday should be hanged,—the usual ebullitions of ignorant servitude and precipitate arrogance.

The course of these Memoirs now leads me to a particular account of the Whig Club of Dublin, in the formation of which Lord Charlemont had the principal share; at whose meetings he often presided, and of which, when his health

permitted, he was the life and ornament. It consisted of the leading members of Opposition in both Houses of Parliament, with the addition of many gentlemen who were not in Parliament, nor belonged to any party, except that of the Constitution. To this description of men there were some few exceptions, which I shall take notice of hereafter. Unlimited has been the abuse and misrepresentation of this society, as if it were a species of monster, engendered by faction, any thing like to which the state had never before seen. The truth is, that many political societies, not unlike this in some respects, but with different appellations, and more miscellaneous in their original construction, had, from time to time, been set up, and gradually died away, in Ireland. Not ten years before, a political association of several of the nobility and gentry had taken place, under the auspices of that great lawyer, Lord Avonmore, then Mr. Yelverton. This association was distinguished by the name of the Monks of St. Patrick; many of the original members of the Whig Club, Lord Charlemont, Mr. Grattan, and others, formerly belonged to this association. Mr. Daly, Lord Chief Baron Burgh, Mr. Ogle, were also members. Both societies were formed in times very interesting to the welfare of Ireland, and their

general object was a co-operation of men, who held, or professed at least to hold, a general similarity of political principles, and resolved to maintain the Rights and Constitution of their Country. At the time of the formation of the Whig Club, the Monks of St. Patrick had, as a body, ceased to exist. When they first assembled, in 1779, the demand of a free trade for Ireland had been made, and, in the course of that session, wisely complied with. Mr. Grattan's celebrated speech and motion for a Declaration of Rights followed, in 1780; and in the year 1782, that motion also was at last, as already stated, and with a change of ministry, entirely successful.

How long after the splendid æra of 1782, the Monks of St. Patrick continued their meetings, I know not, nor is it at all necessary to ascertain. I have traced their progress so far, merely to show, that societies like this seldom survive, for any time at least, the questions for the entertainment of which, or, rather, during the discussion of which, they originally came together. A weak government is always uneasy, but a wise one has no occasion to be troubled about them. The good sense, and good principles of the founders of such societies are certainly the best safeguards, which any ministry can have, inde-

pendent of their own wise conduct; for it is only the nonsense, or pertinacity of ministers, on points which ought to be conceded, that can give them longevity; or, should they even pass the limits which they originally prescribed to themselves, and rise into faction, a sound and constitutional administration may laugh them to scorn. It may however in general be said, that if they continue at all, after the completion of their objects, or, after some particular and interesting period has passed away, they cease to be political, and sink into select convivial parties. In England such societies have always existed, and woe be to its liberties, if that day ever arrives, that should witness their extinction. To the great Whig association in Queen Anne's time, generally known by the name of the Kit Kat Club, Lord Bolinbroke endeavoured to oppose another, and, in point of rank and talents, a very splendid association.* A third society then started up, more

* See his letter to the Earl of Orrery, June 12th, 1711. The prudery with which this celebrated and dissipated statesman mentions the institution he was then forming, is remarkable. "The first regulation proposed, and that which must be inviolably kept, is decency. None of the extravagance of the Kit Kat, none of the drunkenness of the Beef Steak, is to be endured. The improvement of friendship, and the encouragement

decidedly hostile to the Whigs, if that could be, than the ministers, and differing from the latter in some respects, because they thought them not violent enough. This was the October Club. All were produced by the spirit of the times, and with that spirit did they subside.

The violent outcry which was raised, and the misinformation which has taken place with regard to this Whig Club, established chiefly by Lord Charlemont, make it necessary for me to pursue this subject somewhat further than I originally intended. What were the principal objects of the Whig association in England, as it stood in 1712? The preservation of the English constitution, and the succession of the House of Hanover; both of which, during the administration of Lords Orford and Bolinbroke, they considered as in peculiar danger. Numberless were the pamphlets, and numberless were the speeches made against them, for presuming even to breath such an insinuation. They were factious, disrespectful to the Sovereign, and only

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of letters, are to be the two great ends of our society, &c. &c." How scrupulously his Lordship adhered to decorum, how cautious he was, *exactly* at this time too, of offending against propriety and good morals, may be seen in Swift's journal to Stella.

wished to get into place and power from which they had been so lately discarded. So said their enemies. The younger members of that society, Mr. Walpole and Mr. Pulteney particularly, then in the prime of life, venerating, as did the association in general, the ministers of King William, Lord Somers especially, by whose aid the constitution of 1688 had been obtained, made *their* principles the standard of their own political faith. Now what says the first sentence of the declaration of the Whig Club in Ireland? "Whereas, under the circumstances of our renovated constitution, we deem it necessary, that a constant and unremitting watch should be kept against every step of encroachment upon those rights which have been lately re-established, and for the safety of which we cannot but apprehend more danger from an administration which has lately attempted to infringe them, than we should from a ministry formed of those men, under whose power, and with whose concurrence, they were originally restored to us, and whose principles we must approve, because they are *our own*." They then state among other matters, that they adhere to the principles which directed the Lords and Commons to address the Prince of Wales, to take upon himself, during his Royal Father's indisposition, the administra-

tion of affairs, free from occasional, or unconstitutional restrictions, such restrictions being more calculated to answer the views of ambition, than to preserve liberty, or promote the solid interests of the empire; that the *great objects* of the society, are the constitution of the realm, as settled by the Revolution in 1688, and the succession in the House of Brunswick; and, that they will ever maintain, as *sacred* and *indissoluble*, the connection with Great Britain, being in their opinion indispensably necessary for the freedom of this kingdom in particular, and for the freedom, strength, and prosperity of the empire in general." This is the outline.

Mr. Burke considered, and justly, the establishment of 1782, as the true revolution of Ireland. If so, I confess I cannot see any reason why Lord Charlemont, and several Irish noblemen and gentlemen, should be blamed for displaying as much anxiety and fondness of that Revolution in 1789, as was manifested by English lords and gentlemen for their constitution in 1712. The latter apprehended more danger to their political rights from a Tory, than a Whig administration. The former entertained like apprehensions from the existing ministry; and as the English Whigs looked with confi-

dence to Lord Somers, and considered his principles as their own, the Irish Whigs rested with peculiar security on Mr. Fox, and the Rockingham party, under whose power and with whose aid, Irish freedom was established in 1782.

"The Kit Kat Club," says Horace, Lord Orford, "are usually regarded merely as a set of Wits, but, in truth, they were the Patriots to whom England owed the Hanover succession, and its own safety in 1714." Far be from me the presumption to place our Whig Association in a general line of comparison with that illustrious association of men, who, as long as the old English constitution is revered, as long as public principle is dear to us; as long as the most engaging accomplishments, and all the charms of the purest Wit, maintain their accustomed power over our minds, must always be held in the most pleasing and grateful remembrance. They formed a union as rare as it was fortunate, of stations the most distant in society, without encroaching on the privileges of either. The Duke of Somerset considered it as no diminution of his dignity to be, in the unbended hours of such a company, the literary, or convivial associate of Tonson. With the simplicity of English man-

ners, they retained as much of the ancient institutions of chivalry, as was suited to the more tranquil and polished age in which they lived. Though romance, with all its splendid train, had long since vanished, fidelity to honourable engagements, and courtesy to the fair sex, were, by the leading members of that association, most scrupulously adhered to. They were Patriots, they were gentlemen; they invoked the spirit of the constitution, but they invoked the spirit of the muse also; and, whilst they preserved the former, they gave to the latter its most pleasing employment, the celebration of beauty, and the graces of the female character. The unceasing conquests of the Marlborough Daughters were opposed, with an air of gay triumph, to the victories of their father, then in his utmost splendour; and it was with an agreeable extravagance, added in the language of poetry, that their eyes could alone restrain that freedom, so recently established at the Revolution.* All this may be called trifling, but away with moroseness. If it is trifling, it softens, and har-

* See the verses by some members of the Kit Kat Club, especially those by Lord Halifax, and Mr. Manwaryng.

monizes the heart. Our Politics are not always the most favourable to politeness, and he is a dreary personage indeed, who can fastidiously listen to the praises of that sex, which has often, in the midst of temptations, retained those most dear to them in the paths of political honour, or, without any opportunity of displaying such heroism, added new charms to social life; and metamorphosed grave and formidable statesmen into obliging and agreeable companions.—Yet, whilst I pay this tribute to the memory of departed worth, and departed genius, it would be a miserable affectation of humility, if I did not add, that in point of original talents, in useful or ornamental knowledge, some of the members of the Whig Club were not altogether distant from their celebrated predecessors. In attachment to true revolution principles and unfeigned admiration of the constitution, which arose with new lustre from such principles, no way their inferiors. Were I not, perhaps idly, afraid, that even the most sober panegyric might be regarded as something like adulation, I could point to some living characters, as sufficiently illustrative of my assertion; but surely on conconstitutional topics, on the varied subjects of polite literature, Lord Somers could have listened to Lord Charlemont with real satisfaction; Lord

Burlington* would have found an architectural taste, as chastened as his own, in a visit to Marino; and the witty, elegant, and what is far more valuable, good-natured Lord Dorset, might have passed from a conversation on Titian, or Vandyke, at Charlemont House, to the enjoyment of humour as smiling as his own, or gay raillery as polished as Arthur Manwaryng's, in the rooms appropriated to the more select members of the Whig Association. I have alluded to some misinformation with regard to their proceedings. It has been stated, that at the Whig Club "were planned and arranged all the measures for attack on the ministry. Each member had his measure, or his question in turn. The plans of debate, and manœuvre, were preconcerted; and to each was assigned that share of the attack he was most competent to sustain."† The respectable author who wrote this was misinformed. Never, I beg leave to say, were

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* Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington.

"Who plants like Bathurst, or who builds like Boyle."

POPE.

† See Mr. Plowden's History of Ireland.

there any plans of debate preconcerted, or any share of attack assigned to this, or that member at the Whig Club. The meetings of opposition were, if not at Mr. Forbes's house, sometimes at Leinster, and more frequently at Charlemont House. But at none of these houses, much less in a Club room, at a Tavern, where latterly, as is always the case, the company was more miscellaneous than could have been wished, did the members undergo this species of marshalling, which Mr. Plowden has represented. The opposition must have had the gift of prescience, and known the turn which every debate would take, the particular retort, or reply, that would be made, the perpetual wanderings from the subject in question, and the necessity, irregular as such deviations were, of sometimes taking notice of them; all this, and much more, must they have been acquainted with, before they fixed a speaker in a station which he was invariably to support. No arrangement, therefore, of any question to be spoken to in Parliament, was ever made at this Whig meeting. Such a representation gives to it, what Mr. Plowden never intended, the air of the Jacobin Club at Paris; an institution which it never resembled; an institution which Lord Charlemont and his friends held in the utmost

abhorrence.* Some publications issued from the Whig Club, one especially, in consequence of a contest, in which government entangled itself with the city, relative to the rights of the Common Council to negative a Lord Mayor, chosen by the Board of Aldermen; but this question was before the Privy Council, and never came before Parliament. The question relative to the Catholics, the most important of all, and most connected, not merely with the interests, but the passions and prejudices of the people, was indeed brought before Parliament, and *that* question the Whig Club declined all discussion

* The Kit Kat Club once exercised an authority over one of their members, which the Whig Club, I am satisfied, never would have thought of;—when Sir Richard Steele's expulsion from the House of Commons was decided on by the opposite party, his friends at the Kit Kat insisted that he should not make his own speech, but such a one as should be dictated to him. Sir R. Walpole instantly spoke, as if in the House, on behalf of Steele, and made an admirable speech, according to Mr. Pulteney's account, who was present. Had the Whig Club, therefore, ever assumed the liberty of arranging any speeches, or debates, for the House of Commons, it seems that it would not have been singular in doing so; and if there was any thing Jacobinical according to the modern phrase, in such a proceeding, it was a species of Jacobinism that existed long ago.—See Bishop Newton's account of Lord Bath.

of. This, surely, was not inflaming the people against the government, but rather, however unjustly, directing popular indignation towards the association itself. Let it be added here, that some of the subordinate resolutions of this society related to bills then proposed, and often rejected by Parliament; such as the Place Bill, the Bill for disqualifying Revenue Officers from voting at Elections, the Pension Bill, &c. all which are now become the law of the land, though it was repeatedly asserted, in every debate relative to them, day after day, session after session, that they inevitably tended to the separation of this country from England, and would separate both countries in a very few years. Just as Chief Justice Whitshed solemnly assured a jury, and his auditors, that the sole object of the author of a proposal to wear Irish manufactures, was to bring in the Pretender.

That some persons, few, very few indeed, were admitted into this society, and inconsiderately admitted, I freely acknowledge. But to fix any other charge on the Whig Association for the reception of such men, than either a venial ignorance, or culpable facility and good nature, it would be necessary to point out the paths of sedition and treason, into which it was led by such

obnoxious members; or, if you please, into which it led them. It has been said, and truly too, that in parties the tail too often impels the head. Was it so here? They never presumed to influence, nor was it in their power to influence the higher orders of that society. We might as well charge Addison with all the imputed profligacy of Lord Wharton, for both, at a particular period, acted with the same party; and in Ireland, one was Secretary, and the other Viceroy; as attempt to fix an odious suspicion of disloyalty on any class, or particular body of men, on grounds so utterly untenable.

If the reader of these Memoirs is not at all conversant with, or if he is perfectly indifferent to all Irish politics, especially those of late years, he must, I am perfectly sensible, consider all this as peculiarly tedious and uninteresting. But when it has been stated, by high and grave authority, that the rebel confederacy was only an improvement on this society, and more than insinuated, that the leaders of it must have entertained principles directly hostile to all Monarchy and all Constitution, the Biographer of the venerable Lord Charlemont would forget the duty of an historian, all respect to that Nobleman's memory, and the memory of many

illustrious and good men, now no more, if he did not, though with inadequate talents, enter at large into the origin and views of the Whig Association. But there are some politicians who, when parties are opposed to each other in the state, seem to consider all debate, not as it ought to be, an open, liberal, and instructive discussion of the questions that may occasionally engage the attention of parliament, but as an unprincipled contest between two fierce belligerent powers, who think themselves at liberty to resort to every species of hostility within the reach of human invention, provided the depression of an adversary, or some transient, grovelling advantage, are at any rate obtained.

Mr. Burke's correspondence with Lord Charlemont, during this year, was frequent, and much of it confidential. It relates to a momentous period. Many of the personages, who are mentioned in it, are still busy actors in the public scene, which, at that time, was agitated extremely. Such parts of the correspondence, as may without impropriety be given, are here inserted. There was scarcely any gentleman of distinction, who visited Ireland, and who was acquainted with Mr. Burke, who did not obtain an introductory letter from him to Lord Char-

lemont. To publish them all would be idle, for several, however adorned by that elegance of diction, in which the writer was perhaps never excelled, are merely letters of introduction. Some, however, are blended with the history of the day, others express his sentiments on particular occasions, and all bear testimony to the accomplishments, the talents, and the virtues of Lord Charlemont. Mr. Shippen, an American gentleman, of pleasing manners, whose family was allied to the famous William Shippen,* came at this time to Ireland, and was well received here. Some few of Mr. Burke's letters, or portions of them at least, are here given in succession. The first relates to Mr. Shippen.

" My Dear Lord,

" If I were to write all that is in my heart and head relative to you, and to your proceedings, I should write volumes. At present, I abstain from any subject, but that which, at this instant, may give your Lordship occasion to remember me.

" My friend Mr. Shippen, of Pennsylvania, a

* See Mr. Coxe's Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole.

very agreeable, sensible, and accomplished young man, will have the honour of delivering this to your Lordship. I flatter myself, that you will think of him as I do, and if you do, I have no doubt that he will find, under your Lordship's protection, every thing that he can expect, (and he expects a great deal,) from Ireland. He has been for some time upon his travels on the Continent of Europe; and, after this tour, he pays us the compliment of thinking, that there are things and persons worth seeing in Ireland. For one person, I am sure I can answer, and am not afraid of disappointing him, when I tell him that in no country will he find a better pattern of elegance, good breeding, and virtue. I shall say nothing further to recommend my friend to one, to whom a young gentleman, desirous of every sort of improvement is, by that circumstance, fully recommended. America and we are not under the same Crown, but if we are united by mutual good will, and reciprocal good offices, perhaps it may do almost as well. Mr. Shippen will give you no unfavourable specimen of the *new world.*

" Pray remember my most affectionate and respectful compliments, with those of this house, to Lady Charlemont, and Miss Hickman, and

to all those who do us the honour of their good wishes. Believe me, with the sincerest respect and affection, ever,

" My Dear Lord,
" Your most faithful, and
" obedient humble servant,
" Edm. Burke.

" Gerrard-Street, March 29th, 1789."

" My Dearest Lord,

" You do no more than strict justice in allowing the sincerity of my attachment to you, and my readiness, on all occasions, to obey your commands. My affections are concerned in your thinking so, and my pride in having it believed by as many as know me.

" After I had received your Lordship's letter of the 24th of March, I lost no time in attending the P. I cannot say that I executed your Lordship's commission literally: I thought it better to let you speak for yourself. To have done otherwise, would not have been to do justice to the P. to your Lordship, or even to the person charged with your commission. There never was any thing conceived more justly, or expressed with more elegance, than what you

have said of his R. H. I did not think it right to spoil so just, and so handsome a compliment, by giving it in any other words than your own. I risked more, and, without your authority, put the letter into his hands. The P. was much pleased, and I think affected. The account your Lordship has given of the state of politics in Ireland, was certainly not what we could have wished, and indeed expected. It was, however, a relief to his R. H. as he found things much better than, from other accounts, he had conceived them.

"I never had the least idea that the opposition in Ireland could continue against the presiding administration here, however some individuals might be on principle adverse to it. I am charmed with what I have heard of the Duke of Leinster.* I am happy to find him add a character of firmness to the rest of his truly amiable and respectable qualities. Ponsonby† then is, it seems, the Proto-Martyr. I never saw him until the time of your embassy; but I am not

* William, late Duke of Leinster.

† William, late Lord Ponsonby. He had been removed from his office of Post-Master General, after the business of the Regency.

mistaken in the opinion I formed of him, on our first conversation, as a manly, decided character, with a right conformation of mind, and a clear and vigorous understanding. The world will see what is got by leaving a provoked, a powerful enemy; and how well faith is kept by those whose situation has been obtained by their infidelity; one would have thought that personal experience was not necessary for teaching that lesson. As to what you have said of the care to be taken of the Martyrs to their duty, that is a thing of course, in case an opportunity occurs. They would not be injured so much, as the leaders would be eternally disgraced, if they were not made their first objects. It would be a shame indeed, if those who surrender, should profit more by the generosity of their enemies, than those who hold out to the last biscuit, might by the justice and gratitude of their friends. Here we seem to have forgot all serious business.

"I have athousand handsome things to say to your Lordship, on the part of the P. with regard to your principles, your liberality of sentiment, the goodness of your heart, and the politeness of your manners. I think him a judge of these things, and I see that he knows the value of a

compliment for one, who has his civility for every body, but the expression of his approbation for very few.

"Will your Lordship be so good as to remember my affectionate respects to your late colleagues. Mrs. Burke, my brother, and son, beg to present our most grateful duty to Lady Charlemont and Miss Hickman.

"I am,

"With the most heartfelt sentiments of affection,

"My dear Lord, &c.

"EDM. BURKE.

"Saturday, April 4th, 1789."

"MY DEAR LORD.

"I have little to say of importance, and nothing at all to say that is pleasant. But I do not chuse to let my friend Mr. Nevill depart without taking with him some token of my constant love and respect for your Lordship. Your friendship and partiality are things too honourable, and too dear to me, to suffer them to escape from my memory, or from yourself, if I can help it. Indeed, I want consolations, and these are consolations to me of a very powerful and cordial operation. We draw to the end of our business in this strange session. I have

taken no part whatever in the latter period, though in the former I exerted myself with all the activity in my power, and which I thought the crisis called for. Nature has made a decision, which no art, or skill of parties could have produced. When that was done, I had nothing further to do. My time of life, the length of my service, and the temper of the public, rendered it very unfit for me to exert myself in the common routine of opposition. *Turpe senex miles.* There is a time of life in which, if a man cannot arrive at a certain degree of authority, derived from a confidence from the Prince, or the people, which may aid him in his operations, and make him compass useful objects without a perpetual struggle, it becomes him to remit much of his activity. Perpetual failure, even though nothing in that failure can be fixed on the improper choice of the object, or the injudicious choice of means, will detract every day more and more from a man's credit, until he ends without success, and without reputation. In fact, a constant pursuit even of the best objects, without adequate instruments, detracts something from the opinion of a man's judgment. This, I think, may be, in part, the cause of the inactivity of others of our friends, who are in the vigour of life, and in possession of a great degree of lead and authority. I do not

blame them, though I lament that state of the public mind, in which the people can consider the exclusion of such talents, and such virtues from their service, as a point gained to them. The only point in which I can find any thing to blame in those friends, is their not taking the effectual means, which they certainly had in their power, of making an honourable retreat from the prospect of power into the possession of reputation, by an effectual defence of themselves. There was an opportunity which was not made use of for that purpose, and which could scarcely have failed of turning the tables on their adversaries. But I ought to stop; because I find I am getting into the fault common with all those who lose at any play, that of blaming their partners: and indeed nothing has hastened, at all times, the ruin of declining parties so much, as their mutual quarrels, and their condemnation of each other.

"My particular province has been the East Indies. We have rest, or something like it, for the present; but depend on it, I shall persevere to the end, and shall not add myself to the number of those bad examples, in which delinquents have wearied out the constancy of their prosecutors. We may not go through all the charges;

I fear it will be out of our power to do this; but we shall give a specimen of each great head of criminality, and then call for judgment. So far as to a general view of my sole share of business. As to the politics of Ireland, as I see nothing in them very pleasant, I do not wish to revive in your mind, what your best philosophy is required to make tolerable. Enjoy your Marino, and your amiable and excellent family. These are comfortable sanctuaries, when more extensive views of society are gloomy, and unpleasant, or unsafe. May I request, that your Lordship and Lady Charlemont, will think of us, in your retreat, as of those who love and honour you not the least, amidst the general good opinion in which it is your happiness to live. Ever, my dear Lord,

"Your Lordship's most faithful, &c.

"EDM. BURKE.

"Gerrard-Street, July 10, 1789."

"MY DEAREST LORD,

"I think your Lordship has acted with your usual zeal and judgment, in establishing a Whig club in Dublin. These meetings prevent the evaporation of principle in individuals, and give the joint force, and enliven their exertions by

emulation. You see the matter in its true light, and with your usual discernment. Party is absolutely necessary at this time; I thought it always so in this country, ever since I have had any thing to do in public business; and I rather fear, that there is not virtue enough in this period to support party, than that party should become necessary, on account of the want of virtue to support itself by individual exertions.* As to us here, our thoughts of every thing at home, suspended by our astonishment at the wonderful spectacle which is exhibited in a neighbouring and rival country. What spectators, and what actors! England gazing with astonishment at a French struggle for liberty, and not knowing whether to blame, or to applaud. The thing, indeed, though I thought I saw something like it in progress for several years, has still somewhat in it paradoxical and mysterious. The spirit, it is impossible not to admire; but the old Parisian ferocity has broken out in a shocking manner. It is true, that this may be

* See his very ingenious and eloquent defence of party, in that admirable pamphlet, "Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents." It was written in 1770.

no more than a sudden explosion; if so, no indication can be taken from it; but if it should be *character*, rather than accident, then that people are not fit for liberty, and must have a strong hand, like that of their former masters, to coerce them. Men must have a certain fund of natural moderation, to qualify them for freedom, else it becomes noxious to themselves, and a perfect nuisance to every body else. What will be the event, it is hard, I think, still to say. To form a solid constitution, requires wisdom, as well as spirit; and whether the French have wise heads among them, or, if they possess such, whether they have authority equal to their wisdom, is yet to be seen. In the mean time, the progress of this whole affair is one of the most curious matters of speculation that ever was exhibited.

"Our neighbour,* the Duke of Portland, is still somewhat stiff in his limbs, though he can walk. He is the same virtuous, calm, steady character, in all sorts of weather, natural and political. He always thinks and speaks of your Lordship, as such men as you and he ought to

* The Duke was then at Bulstrode,

think and speak of each other. I am ever, my most dear Lord,

" Your Lordship's faithful and affectionate,

" EDM. BURKE.

" Beconsfield, August 9th, 1789."

The debates of the Session, 1790, were such as might be expected from the violent concussion of parties. An uncommon accession of strength was, by the junction of the Ponsonby family, given to the opposition. As a debater, Mr. George Ponsonby was little, if at all inferior, to any one, who had ever sat in the Commons of Ireland. Diction, pure, simple, and perspicuous, variety of argument, not expanded, but compressed and forcible; great promptitude, great vigour in attack, aided by a memory the most uncommonly retentive; such were the characteristics of his eloquence. Never was Mr. Grattan more pointed, more various, more eloquently indignant, than during this session. He had an admirable parliamentary lieutenant, if I may be allowed the phrase, in Mr. Curran, who animated every debate with all his powers. He was copious, splendid, full of wit and life, and ardour. Mr. Forbes was eminently useful, and from the stores of his reading, selected such well-arranged materials, as blended themselves

with, supported, and enriched every question. Never were his laborious researches, his general parliamentary and constitutional knowledge, more conspicuous than at this time. Altogether, it was, on the part of opposition, the most completely brilliant session in my remembrance. Administration seemed at first astounded by the incessant rapidity of the attack, nor was it till towards the close of the Session that they recovered themselves sufficiently to encounter their adversaries with any proportionate ability, when Sir Hercules Langrishe spoke with real talent, accompanied with his usual good humour, urbanity, and moderation. But a leader, like Mr. Fitzgibbon, was wanting. The divisions at this time were peculiarly strong; generally more than ninety; and, as I well know, they might often have passed one hundred, if the ranks of opposition could ever be as well marshalled as those of their opponents. That, however, cannot be expected. Lord Charlemont attended every debate, and spent so much more of his time in the Commons than the Lords, that it was justly said, he should have been admitted *ad eundem* in the former assembly. It is true, that he never omitted his attendance in the Upper House; but appeals constituted, at this time, the principal business of their Lordships;

they felt none of the warmth of the Commons, and Lord Fitzgibbon began already to rule there with almost unlimited sway. The principal topics urged by the opposition were, the creation of fourteen new places, for the purposes of unconstitutional influence in the House of Commons, and the disposal of Peerages for purposes equally corrupt; in other words, conferring the honours of nobility for money, and that money expended in the purchase of seats in the Lower House of Parliament. This charge, than which a more criminal one could scarcely be adduced, was but feebly resisted. It was indeed retorted, and at a subsequent period more particularly, that a similar practice had in one instance taken place during Lord Northington's administration, which some of the leading members of the opposition entirely supported, and were the advisers of. As to the various questions which were agitated in the Lower House, I must refer the reader to the parliamentary debates. They cannot come properly within the limits of Memoirs of Lord Charlemont, which take notice only of such as were of superior magnitude, or those which his Lordship was more immediately connected with. The Session was as short as it was spirited, Parliament being

prorogued early in April, and dissolved almost directly afterwards.

Lord Charlemont's old friends, the Volunteers of the North, were again visited and reviewed by him this summer. "The Derry army," he mentions in his letter,* "was at least three thousand four hundred strong. I say at least, because the returns were made so strictly, as to be under the reality. They went through their business incomparably, notwithstanding the most disadvantageous weather." The Volunteer spirit had, however, at this time, began to decline.

The new Parliament met the 10th July, 1790. Mr. Foster was re-elected Speaker, not without a large minority in favour of Mr. William Ponsonby.† The principal object in calling Parliament at that unusual season was, to obtain a vote of credit to the amount of £200,000, in consequence of the aggression at Nootka Sound.

* Extract of a letter to Haliday, Fort Stewart, July 30th, 1790.

† Mr. Plowden says, that the House did not divide, but he is mistaken.

This hostility, on the part of Spain, was the sole topic dwelt on in the speech from the Throne. All parties were unanimous in support of the honour of his Majesty's Crown, and the inseparable connection of the two kingdoms. A general harmony of sentiment prevailed during this Session, which was uncommonly limited, as it closed the 24th of July.

The friendship and cordial attachment which uniformly subsisted between the Marquis of Rockingham and Lord Charlemont, have, in the course of this work, been frequently mentioned. At this time he was enabled, by the kind and pious aid of the Marchioness, to indulge the feelings of his heart towards his lost friend, and place an admirable likeness of him, finely executed in the purest marble, at Charlemont-House. The Bust of Lord Rockingham, with suitable accompaniments, and the inscription beneath, written by Lord Charlemont, occupies a part of the saloon, or rather new library, which, though not large, is truly elegant, and is peculiarly graced by this, its best ornament. Part of Lady Rockingham's letters to Lord Charlemont, relative to its completion, may, it is to be presumed, be inserted, and with propriety, here. On no other subject perhaps, very few certainly,

should I think myself entitled to give any portion of her correspondence to the world. But the same respect to that noble Lady, which justly withholds me from any such intrusion, in this instance impels me forward, as in no better way could I pay that tribute, however slight, to her memory, to which it has so entire a claim. To turn aside from politics at any time, or, at least, when politics are unaccompanied by any thing very dignified, or inspiring, cannot be a matter of much regret; but when such a deviation leads us to the contemplation of an illustrious matron, engaged in the sweet and grateful, though melancholy office of recalling to the sculptor, the features of a noble husband, for ever dear to her, and from the stores of her own memory, facilitating the labours of the artist; such a deviation is indeed soothing. With two or three letters of Lady Rockingham to Lord Charlemont, one also from Mr. Burke to him, is given, as in part adverting to the same subject.

"—— I fear I must have appeared extremely blameable to your Lordship, and I am free to confess, that I have partly been so: Neither the picture, nor Tassie's profile could be of any help, as Nollikens said; but in the summer,

when his business permitted him, I got him to prepare a fresh model, and bring it down here; and he was so patient as to work upon it, after my instructions, two whole days, and alter a million of times according to my wish, till I really thought a great degree of likeness was obtained, and a spirit given to the countenance, which, I am sure, the other casts were totally void of; for there was a poverty in the character of those, and a tame, but agonized look, which expressed nothing of *him*, either in life or death; his complacency of countenance had nothing of tameness when living, and I was assured, that the agony of dissolution was presently restored to a sweet serenity in every feature. I sent to Mr. Burke to come and see the amendments; Mr. Byng also came, by chance, and their opinions of the visible improvement, gave me infinite satisfaction. Had I wrote to your Lordship just then, it would have been in a sanguine strain, but I postponed till a cast was made, which had some delay from Nollikens having some journies to make; but, as he said he had a remarkable fine piece of marble, I ordered him to begin the bust, and get forward with it as fast as possible, to make up for the long delay, which my hatred to bespeak what, (from my own feelings,) I judged would be so unanswer-

able to your kind wishes, had occasioned. I hope the waiting a while will prove more acceptable to your Lordship, in receiving a more expressive resemblance of your beloved friend, and that you will excuse my weakness in this matter: I did not chuse to prejudice your ideas, by giving you the whole of mine, with regard to the cast I sent, neither can I yet say, that I am content, though vastly more so. I will have the honour of writing to your Lordship again, when the bust is nearly finished.—I was shocked to hear of the death of your Lord Lieutenant, the poor Duke of Rutland, who was our relation, and once very partial, and affectionate to our house.—I fear he took no care of his health. I have troubled you too long, and will only add, that I am, with true esteem,

"Your Lordship's very
"obliged, humble servant,
"M. Rockingham.

"Hillingdon-House, Dec. 7th, 1787."

"—— For a length of time past, I really have not had the courage to write to your Lordship, knowing myself to have been the only cause of your not receiving the bust as soon as it was finished, which certainly would have been the case, could I have consented to its going without my

seeing it, and a variety of things, which would appear trifling, and incomprehensible to another person, were serious impediments to my being able to go to town. The distress and uneasiness it has cost me not to have been able to exert myself better, can hardly be expressed; but the satisfaction at having at last fulfilled my devoirs, is as great. Mr. Nollikens assured me, that he would pack up, and send with the greatest care, the bust, by the next ship. I must now speak a word upon its merit. The marble is as beautifully perfect as any thing can be; and I really am as much contented with the resemblance, as it is possible to be with any thing of that sort; I hope you will think, it has greatly profited from the pains I took, and the patience that the artist exerted in following my directions. Be so good as to place it so as for the right side of the bust to strike the eye first. The front and the left side have not, to my eye, so strong a resemblance; but, upon the whole, I hope it is worthy of the place your Lordship has kindly destined for it; and your accepting it, as a mark of my gratitude for so flattering a testimony of your regard to the original, will be the highest satisfaction you can confer on me. I must again beg of you to pardon my negligences, and to

believe that I am, with much truth and regard,

"Your Lordship's most obliged,

"humble servant,

"M. ROCKINGHAM.

"October 21st, 1788."

"DEAR LORD CHARLEMONT,

"I fear I must have appeared very ungrateful to your Lordship, in having kept silence so long, after receiving your kind remembrance in the drawing you promised me, when I had the honour and pleasure of seeing you at Hillingdon. The truth is, that at the time it came, I was so indifferent, that writing was a very irksome employment to me, and has continued so; though I am certainly better, and now able to take up my pen, and express my just sense of the elegant and affectionate manner in which your Lordship has paid the tribute of friendship. The inscription you composed for that bust, which you have made the prominent feature in your beautiful saloon, is every thing that a friend could wish from a friend. I think the sanction of truth permits me to say, that you have given the precise character of the

person, in words that flow from the heart. I hope your Lordship is enjoying good health; I thought you looked remarkably well when I had the honour of seeing you here, and was afraid you might be the worse for walking out that very cold day. I wish I could, at this time, have the pleasure of shewing your Lordship this little place, it is in such perfect beauty. I cannot conclude, without returning my best thanks for two canisters of snuff. Your supplies of Irish snuff are always so excellent, that my taste becomes too nice. I beg my compliments may be made acceptable to Lady Charlemont. I am, with much regard,

"Your Lordship's faithful,

"and obliged servant,

"M. ROCKINGHAM.

"Hillingdon House, June 28th, 1790."

"MY DEAR LORD,

"A man makes but a bad figure in apology, even when he has an indulgent friend to whom he may offer it. I think I may as well cast myself at once on your goodness; for, if you are not of yourself disposed to make excuses for my silence, or to pardon it without any excuse, I really do not know how I can offer any thing,

which may induce you to forgive me. I am, unfortunately, very irregular, and immethodical. To tell you I have been at once much occupied, and much agitated with my employment, might make it appear as if I thought myself and my occupations of more consequence than I hope I do. So I leave it with you; entirely persuaded, that you do not think that either neglect of you, or indifference to the matter of your commission, are among the things for which I ought to give no account. I do not receive the drawing quite so early as might be expected. As soon as I could see Lady Rockingham, I gave her the drawing, and the inscription; she felt much affected with the tender and melancholy consolation she received from your Lordship's genius and friendship. The memorial of Lord Rockingham ought to be in the house of the man whom he resembled the most, and loved the best; it is a place fit for a temple to his memory. The inscription was such as we both approved most entirely.* I will endeavour to procure for your Lordship a drawing of the monument at Wentworth; it is really a fine thing, and the situation wonderfully well cho-

* See the Appendix, No. 4.

sen.—You know what my opinion is about the importance of Ireland, to the safety of the Succession, and the tranquillity of this kingdom. With that opinion, as well as from my cordial good wishes to your Lordship, and your friends, I rejoice to find, that, on the whole, the elections have been favourable. This is more than I dare to promise myself for this side of the water. You will permit me to convey, through your Lordship, my most thankful acknowledgments to the Royal Academy of Ireland, for the great honour they have done me. Believe me ever, my dear Lord,

" Your faithful, and most obliged,

" humble servant,

" Edm. Burke.

" Beaconsfield, May 25th, 1790."

At the beginning of the subsequent year, 1791, administration thought proper to divide the authority of the Lieutenancy, or government of Armagh, which had for considerably more than a century been almost exclusively enjoyed by Lord Charlemont's ancestors, into two separate appointments, and to add Lord Gosford's name to his in the government of that county. The nobleman thus joined to his

Lordship in that respectable situation, was certainly of a very ancient family, long established in Armagh,* of extensive property, and many estimable qualities. To approved loyalty and moderation in his political principles, he added conciliating manners, and becoming gallantry of spirit, as his conduct at all times, particularly at a subsequent period in the commencement of the rebellion, sufficiently evinced. But this division of the authority of Governor, though it had often prevailed in some counties of Ireland, seemed evidently calculated to mark the disapprobation in which Lord Charlemont's political conduct was held at the Castle, and that the mode adopted in giving him an adjunct, was particularly ungracious, appears from the following letter:†

"A few days since, Sir Annesley Stewart called upon me, with an account, that he had just then read in the gazette, the appointment of Lord Gosford, who was joined with me in the Lieute-

* His Lordship's family name, Acheson, is well known to those who are conversant in the lighter parts of Swift's Miscellaneous Poetry, as the lively and celebrated Poem of Hamilton's Bawn, was written at the seat of Sir Arthur Acheson, Lord Gosford's immediate ancestor.

† Letter to Dr. H. February 7th, 1791.

nancy of Armagh, an event of which I now heard for the first time, and which had no way been previously intimated to me. A duplicate of Governors, that is to say, commanders in chief of militia,* has ever appeared to me a political bull, and though this absurd practice has of late years taken place in Ireland to the most ridiculous excess, I did not think that it ought to effect a family, which has for a long time, indeed, been in the possession of that *Plume.* Clear in my own mind of the propriety of what I was about to do, and conscious, that though the exhibition of family pride be of all other things the most ridiculous, yet there are occasions, when it is criminal not to assert one's own dignity, I immediately wrote to the Secretary, signifying to him that, having been informed by the gazette, &c. I requested of him to give in to the Lord Lieutenant my resignation. Of my conduct in this business, I hope my dear friend will not disapprove, and I trust that my friends in Armagh will think that I have acted right; in which case, instead of a decrease, I shall experience an increase of that partiality which I ever

* The militia, as now established, was not adopted in Ireland till 1793.

shall endeavour to deserve, and to turn, as far as in me lies, to their advantage, and that of my country."

But such ministerial acts as this, where ill humour and resentment predominate more than true policy, are almost invariably attended with consequences precisely the reverse of those, which the advisers of them most unaccountably expect. It happened so here. "Was there ever such an administration!" his Lordship triumphantly exclaims, in his letter to Haliday.* "They have essentially served and exalted the man they wished to degrade. My friends in Armagh are so kindly angry, that, unequal as I am to writing, I have been compelled to interpose in behalf of moderation."

His Lordship had, on this occasion, the satisfaction of receiving a very warm and affectionate address from a large portion of the freeholders of the county of Armagh.† Notwithstanding all his pacific efforts, it is conceived in terms

* Dublin, February 18th, 1791.

† In a note, at the conclusion, it is stated, that the address was signed by 1378 freeholders.

highly indignant against the Administration. One sentence is so historically exact, that I shall transcribe it.—"Your Lordship was *sole* governor of our county, in times rather more perilous than the present; in times shall we say, when the kingdom had *no* government, or none but that derived from the strength, spirit, and wisdom of the people, so often, and with such zealous integrity, informed, advised, and led by your Lordship." His answer is cordial and spirited.*

Soon after this, the Bath waters being recommended as beneficial to the health of some of his Lordship's family, he prepared, at the close of April to go there. The journey was undertaken by him with cheerfulness. "However disagreeable,"† says he, "it may be to a man, who is, perhaps, more than any other, an habitudinarian, it is not pleasant to me to give up Marino; it is still less pleasant to me to give up my library; but it is least of all pleasant to absent myself from that sphere of public life, where my endeavours may possibly be of some

* Dublin April 19th, 1791.

† Letter to Haliday, Dublin, April 27th, 1791.

small utility to my country. My absence, however, will be, I trust, but short; and if wanted, I shall be ready and at hand. Bath waters, they tell me, may be of service to me also, but that is a motive of a nature secondary indeed."

On this occasion he experienced the regard, affection, and veneration, which all ranks in Dublin entertained for him in the highest degree. When his intended journey, and the cause of it, were generally known, Charlemont House was attended by crowds of visitants, all anxious, and expressing the most heartfelt desire, for the re-establishment of the health of his excellent Countess, his own, and those most dear to them. On the day of his embarking for England, all was anxiety and ferment. "The city," to make use of Shakespeare's phrase, "cast its people out upon him." Every one was abroad. The streets, from Charlemont House to the river, were completely thronged; all hung on his chariot-wheels, with looks of gratitude and attachment, and poured forth the most ardent prayers for his return. As his carriage moved on, attended by numbers of gentlemen, his friends, and many of the Volunteer associations, the spectacle was of the most interesting kind. It afforded, indeed, none of the usual

objects of popular and ordinary gaze. It derived nothing from the miseries, the unyoked passions of the multitude, or the solemn follies of mankind. But the qualities that do most honour to mankind—generous sympathy, and generous admiration of pure and untired patriotism, ranged themselves on every side, and communicated a modest and winning splendor to the scene, which all the lamentable spoils, and pernicious glare of Roman domination, in its ascent to the capitol, forbad Romans ever to witness. Let me not be considered as having said too much on this occasion. I hope that there is not that constant perverseness in our nature, which renders us indifferent to the homage so seldom paid to excellence, which is produced at home, and presents itself to our eyes, unaccompanied by those sad reflections which deprive glory of more than half its triumph. Is a certain portion of human misery necessary to constitute, as it too often so strangely does, so large a part of our historical panegyrics?

The marks of respect which his situation, at this time, more particularly called forth, were not confined to the metropolis alone. Many of his friends and admirers in the North, and elsewhere, deprived of his presence, uncertain

as to his state of health, naturally wished to indulge their feelings, by erecting his statue. This testimony of grateful affection, he, for a long time, altogether declined; but being much urged, he so far gave way to their kind importunities, as to express his wishes, that, in any public monument to be erected to his honour, the Volunteers should also be designated, and their name joined to his. In that case, he said, the monument would be more acceptable to him, and less objectionable.* He declined, however, any decision, till the return of his dear and excellent friend, James Stewart,† whose "incomparable judgment," his Lordship adds, "and ardent affection towards me, must render his advice desirable, if not essential."

As to the proposed monument, unquestionably this mode of doing him reverence, in his lifetime, however suggested by increasing attachment, and almost filial duty, could not be exactly suited to the justness of that moral taste,

* Letter from Bath, June 22 and 23, 1791.

† Mr. James Stewart, M. P. for the county of Tyrone, already mentioned; and who must be always mentioned with respect.

which, on all occasions, was so conspicuous in his conduct. I have heard nothing more of this statue, or monument, nor am I certain that it ever was erected. Every reader, or, at least, every Irish reader, will anticipate me, in saying, that he has a far more glorious and durable one in the hearts of his countrymen.

In the session of this year, 1791, the Opposition was not quite so strong in numbers as the preceding one; but their spirit suffered no diminution. The increase of salaries to various officers, in different departments; the still further extension of a most unconstitutional influence in Parliament; a motion to enquire whether any legislative provisions then existed, which might prevent Ireland from receiving the full benefit of her free trade, beyond the Cape of Good Hope, and the Straits of Magellan; the sale of the Irish Peerage. Such were the questions which principally engaged the attention of the House of Commons. As to the Peerage, it should seem that the representatives of the people were far more jealous of the abuses which had, in too many instances, been suffered to prevail in several new creations, than the Peers themselves were; for I have no recollection of any question whatever being enter-

tained on the subject, in the Upper Assembly. In subordinate matters, relative to the promulgation of their rank and titles, their Lordships had sometimes shown an alacrity and resentment, which, if directed to higher objects, might have sheltered their order from the contumelious treatment which it experienced from a variety of Ministers; but a printer, though far less noble, was certainly much safer game than a statesman.*

No one lamented more than Lord Charlemont did his almost invincible disclination to address a public assembly on this alleged sale of peerages. He felt it deeply, and too truly predicted its consequences. Had he been in the habits of public speaking, he would, several years before, have addressed his brother Peers on the necessity

* The House of Lords, many years ago, committed one La Boissiere to prison, who very innocently printed a list of the Irish Peerage without permission. An Epigram was written on this occasion, by Arthur Dawson, one of the Barons of the Exchequer in Ireland. It was nearly as follows:

"The Lords have to prison sent La Boissere,
"For printing the rank and the name of each Peer;
"And there he must stay, till he's not worth a souse,
"For, to tell *who the Peers* are, *reflects* on the House."

of appealing to the Crown against its Ministers, for their idle and wanton abuse of one of the most important prerogatives entrusted to the executive power. Most certainly at that period, the honours of the Irish Peerage were scattered with the most unthinking and impolitic profusion; one good effect, however, this profusion had, which certainly never was intended;—it retained some illustrious Commoners of great property in the Lower House, who were perfectly ashamed of going in a vulgar crowd to the Upper One. A rich adventurer from the East or the West, was advanced to the rank of an hereditary legislator, in a country where he had neither property nor connection of any sort, which he never saw, or wished to see;—or, an insignificant member of the British or Irish House of Commons, whose claims were as importunate, as his services were pitiful, found himself equally obtruded on the old, or more recent but meritorious nobility. The Minister, after having him long in his possession, and not knowing exactly what to do with him, thought it perhaps most convenient to make him an Irish Peer;—this has happened more than once.

But to return. Lord Charlemont remained at Bath for near six months. His correspondence

with his valuable medical friend continued as unreserved as usual; but it related much to family concerns, and topics with which the public has nothing to do. The following letters contain nothing remarkable; but one of them presents his opinion, in a few words, as to the disgraceful scenes which took place at Birmingham at this time. To the religious and political establishments of his country Lord Charlemont was indeed the warmest friend ; but certainly, though he differed totally from Dr. Priestley as a theologist and politican, he did not think that such auxiliaries as fire and sword were the most respectable in combating improper speculations, or supporting sacred order.

* " The excuse you are pleased to make for what you call your long forbearance, is by no means valid, nor indeed admissible, since you are too well skilled in the nature of maladies to be ignorant that nothing can so essentially relieve those nervous feelings, of which my last letter complained, as pleasurable occupation, and too well versed in the constitution of the human mind not to know, that, of all occupations, there

* Bath, July 30, 1798.

is none so pleasurable as the perusal of letters from distant friends. Nothing in truth can more clearly shew the power of the mind over bodily disorder, than the effect your letters produce. The character, most certainly, in which they are written, is not the best remedy for a weak sight, and yet, when, by poring over them, I have made out your words, and, consequently, your sense, even my eyes are the better for that labour, which, exerted in decyphering the writing of an uninteresting correspondent, would be apt to injure them.

"The Birmingham brutes, as you justly call them, are a disgrace to England, a disgrace to humanity; and the letter of the gentlemen, is, if possible, worse than the outrages of the rabble. This place is horribly disagreeable, but if, in the grand point, it answers our purpose, we shall esteem it a Paradise."

*"Delighted by the receipt of your letter, I am sorry to be compelled to tell you, that I am scarcely able to answer it, having for some time past been much out of order, occasioned, as I

* Bath, October 13th, 1791.

suppose, by the change of season, which usually affects my ridiculous nerves; but a short letter is better than none, and I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of informing you, that Sunday next is fixed for our setting out for Ireland.

"I have, with the highest approbation, and the greatest pleasure, perused the Dissenter's Address, and, not content with reading it, have talked so much in its praise, that I have made every one read it with applause. Many, you know, there are who never think of any publication till they hear it praised, and then take upon themselves to judge, when, in effect, they only echo. I never had the least idea, that the Potentates of Europe would burn their fingers in the French flame; but now that matter is, I think, entirely out of the question, though not, I should suppose, for the reasons given by your Parisian politicians. Nothing could afford me higher pleasure than again to visit my old quarters. How, indeed, I shall be disposed of next summer, is a matter of uncertainty; but impossibility alone could prevent my obeying a summons to my duty. The worst of it, however, is, that such impossibility may exist.

"The Duke of Leinster has honoured me, by

joining me with his Royal Highness* in the commission of godfather."

In the following letter his Lordship differs from Haliday, as to some points, and certainly very material ones.†

"Thank you for your letter;—thank you for the explicit, manly, and friendly manner in which you avow and explain your sentiments; a manner worthy of my friend, and for which I must thank you, notwithstanding the painful situation into which your letter, kind as it is, has cast me. Not to be able perfectly to agree with you, must at all times give me pain; but the sensation is aggravated tenfold by my finding myself utterly incapable of explaining, as I could wish, the reasons of my disagreement. I cannot entirely adopt your opinions, nor coincide with your reasoning, and yet the wretched state of my nerves absolutely precludes my entering into the argument, or endeavouring to justify myself where I differ."

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* The Prince of Wales, to the young Marquis of Kildare, now Duke of Leinster.

† Dublin, December 15th, 1791.

As the best part of this letter was confidential, it would be improper to publish it altogether; I shall only insert such extracts from it as cannot be considered as strictly so, and do credit to the head and heart of the noble writer. The difference of sentiment between him and his friend, seemed to be chiefly with regard to some claims of the Catholics, which it was expected would be brought forward in the Session of Parliament then fast approaching.

" For Heaven's sake, let us not amuse ourselves with dangerous experiments. In one of Lucian's Dialogues, the wily Proteus desires Menelaus, who doubted the reality of that fire into which he was about to transform himself, to try the effect, by taking him by the hand; to which the shrewd Spartan laconically replies, " Οὐκ ἀσφαλὴς ἡ Πεῖρα ὦ Πρωτεῦ."*

" You ask me whether things are not much altered since the time of the Convention, and whether the French Revolution has not made a wide difference? Some difference, I confess it has made; but even though matters in France

* " The experiment is not easy, Proteus."

should remain as they are, by no means, in my opinion, an essential one. At all events, time should be given for the perfect establishment of that wonderful and glorious change. Exactly as it is it cannot remain; many alterations must, and will be made: and, with grief of heart I speak it, there are some circumstances, which might induce a thinking man to fear, to tremble, for a reverse. No Constitution is, indeed, firmly established but the British, which, spite of the ill effects that time, wealth, luxury, and consequent corruption, have wrought; spite of Payne's ingenious, but not solid animadversions, I must still regard as the best that ever was devised, principally for this reason among many others; that it exclusively possesses the almost divine power of renovation, and the innate faculty of repairing its defects, without departing from its genuine spirit, but merely by a legal recurrence to its first principles.

"The French Constitution was born with maladies, which may, however, and probably will be remedied; but then, it depends for its existence on a people in all ages inconstant, and now corrupted with every species of vice. The American, which is so much better, can only last till that immense region, increasing in

wealth and population, shall be divided into various states, republics, and kingdoms, while the British Oak, blasted as it may be, will, by its native vigour, shake off its maladies, and remain for ages a lasting monument of its superior strength. But I must conclude with a thousand things yet to say. Happy, however, I am, in being able to end my letter with a perfect concurrence in your opinion, respecting the precipitancy of the movers, and the prematurity of the measure; and this surely is an irrefragable argument against encouraging hopes which cannot be immediately complied with. Disappointment is a never-failing source of anger, and possibly a tumult, and nothing is more wanting to us, both as a nation and as individuals, than peace and tranquillity. For, in truth, I am weary of political bustle, and now utterly unable to go through it.

"Solve senescentum maturè sanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus, et ilia Ducat.

"I have received a second letter from you, which you will easily conceive I am little able to answer. Upon the topic of education, I have one word to say. Nothing can be more wise than your sentiments on this head. Seminaries com-

mon to all persuasions would, both in appearance and reality, create and strengthen that cordial union among Irishmen, which it must be the wish of every honest man to cultivate. I have had the misfortune to differ from my friend, though I am sure not widely. Though yet unconconvinced, I am still, I repeat it, open to conviction, and if it ever shall come, I will cordially embrace it. Nay, I will say more. As my affection towards *all* my countrymen is sincere and ardent, I am consequently possessed of one principle, which strongly tends towards conviction, namely, a wish, though hitherto a vain one, to be convinced."———

A ce vray citoyen, sachez vous conformer,
Et retenez de lui, nation genereuse,
Que moins une mere est heureuse,
Plus ses enfans doivent l'aimer.*

The perusal of the above letter brought to my mind those verses of the Chevalier de Boufflers, which were addressed by him to the unhappy,

* See l'Histoire des principaux Evénemens du Régne de F. Guillaume, Roi de Prusse, par M Le Comte de Ségur. A most excellent work.

divided people of Poland, and recommended to their imitation the conduct of one of their best Patriots, the venerated Malachowski. I confess, I know not to whom they can be better applied than to the benevolent Lord Charlemont, or any country, where such admonition, and such an example may be of more utility, than to Ireland.

A word or two with regard to literature may be now permitted. At this time, nor indeed till the Union took place, was there any Act of Parliament which regulated literary property in Ireland. It was often proposed to bring in a bill for that purpose, during the existence of the Irish Legislature. But, I know not how, such efforts were always ineffectual. Authors were thus exposed to the constant invasion o e booksellers here, and we accordingly find some very eminent ones, especially Mr. Gibbon, lamenting the repeated inroads that were thus made on their property. Sir William Blackstone, as I have been informed, was far more angry than Gibbon, for numbers of his excellent Commentaries were printed in Dublin, and sent for sale to America. From the following letter it appears, that some bookseller here undertook to print Mr. Walpole's Tragedy of the Mysterious

Mother, without his knowledge or consent, and Lord Charlemont, from his disapprobation of such a practice, and unvarying regard for Mr. Walpole, interfered as to the printing. Mr. Walpole seems to have been highly gratified by such a procedure. He accordingly wrote as follows to Lord Charlemont:

"Berkeley-Square, 17th Feb. 1791.

"It is difficult, my Lord, with common language that has been so much prostituted in compliments, to express the real sense of gratitude, which I do feel at my heart, for the obligation I have to your Lordship, for an act of friendship, as unexpected as it was unsolicited; which last circumstance doubles the favour, as it evinces your Lordship's generosity, and nobleness of temper, without surprizing me. How can I thank your Lordship, as I ought, for interesting yourself, and of yourself to save me a little mortification, which I deserve, and should deserve more, had I the vanity to imagine that my printing a few copies of my disgusting Tragedy would occasion different, and surreptitious editions of it?

"Mr Walker has acquainted me, My Lord, that your Lordship has most kindly interposed to prevent a bookseller of Dublin from printing

an edition of the Mysterious Mother without my consent; and with the conscious dignity of a great mind, your Lordship has not even hinted to me the graciousness of that favour. How have I merited such condescending goodness, my Lord? Had I a prospect of longer life, I never could pay the debt of gratitude; the weightier, as your Lordship did not intend I should know that I owe it. My gratitude can never be effaced, and I am charmed that it is due, and due with so much honour to me, that nothing could bribe me to have less obligation to your Lordship, of which I am so proud. But as to the Play itself, I doubt it must take its fate. Mr. Walker tells me the booksellers have desired him to remonstrate to me, urging that they have already expended fifty pounds; and Mr. Walker adds, as no doubt would be the case, that should this edition be stifled, when now expected, some other printer would publish one. I certainly might indemnify the present operator but I know too much of the *craft*, not to be sure that I should be persecuted by similar exactions, and, alas! I have exposed myself but too much to the tyranny of the press, not to know that it taxes delinquents, as well as multiplies their faults. In truth, my Lord, it is too late now to hinder copies of my Play from being

spread. It has appeared here, both whole, and in fragments; and to prevent a spurious one, I was forced to have some printed myself; therefore, if I consent to an Irish edition, it is from no vain desire of diffusing the performance. Indeed, my good Lord, I have lived too long, not to have divested myself both of vanity and affected modesty. I have not existed to past seventy-three without having discovered the futility and triflingness of my own talents; and at the same time, it would be impertinent to pretend to think, that there is no merit in the execution of a Tragedy, on which I have been so much flattered. Though I am sincere in condemning the egregious absurdity of selecting a subject so improper for the stage, and even offensive to private readers. But I have said too much on a personal theme, and therefore, after repeating a million of thanks to your Lordship, for the honour of your interposition, I beg your Lordship, if you please, to signify to the bookseller that you withdraw your prohibition; but I shall not answer Mr. Walker's letter till I have your Lordship's approbation; for you are both my Lord Chamberlain and Licencer, and though I have a tolerably independent spirit, I may safely trust myself under the absolute power of one, who has voluntarily protected me

against the licentiousness of those who have invaded my property, and who distinguishes so accurately and justly between licence and liberty.

"I have the honour to be,

"With the utmost respect, and infinite gratitude,

"My Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obliged,

"and most devoted, humble servant,

"HOR. WALPOLE."

The French Revolution had now made considerable progress. From its commencement, it had been hated by some, dreaded by others; but by many, who really wished well to the establishment of genuine liberty, and hoped that its errors would yield to its perfections, it was favourably regarded. The agitation which it occasioned throughout Europe was, indeed, extreme. No wonder. The depression of the old monarchical power of France (it was not yet overthrown) was alone sufficient to excite astonishment in the mind of every thinking man whatever. But when to the loosening this vast fabric from its foundations were added new doc-

trines and theories, which before seemed only to occupy the minds of ingenious and brilliant, but, for the most part, speculative writers; and now decended from the closets of such men, to mingle themselves in the real concerns of life; to oppose opinions the best founded, institutions the most regarded; and finally, to overshadow the present state of morals, and of politics, throughout Europe; it cannot, indeed, be matter of surprize, that some of the wisest and firmest men were astounded by the march, and dreaded the establishment of such novel assailants. To oppose them by force of arms seems, however, a very unwise policy. But to enter into such a disquisition, is not my purpose, nor suited to the more confined subject of this work. It is sufficient to say, that, in their progress, they touched this country also, and indeed, considering its situation, in every aspect that a politician can regard it, not to be visited by such a migration, would be almost as much a matter of astonishment as the stupendous event from which that migration flowed. Ireland was, indeed, visited by revolutionary principles; but their progress at this time was limitted. In the North, and neighbourhood of Belfast particularly, they were most prevalent. The general body of the Roman Catholics seemed unaffected

by them. But with these revolutionary doctrines there also sprung up, and was sedulously cherished by many honourable and good men, a warm attachment to genuine constitutional freedom; an abhorrence of despotism, in every shape; and a laudable desire to communicate the blessings of civil and religious freedom, or, in other words, the privileges of the British constitution, to all classes of men whatever. The feelings of such men were damped, not extinguished, by the scenes of anarchy which then began to unfold themselves in France. With the French, if they condemned their conduct in many, nay, most respects, they also sympathized as a people who had suffered from long and inveterate abuses; from an interior policy, the evils of which the humblest peasant had no chance of totally escaping; and, above all, from a profligate, unfeeling, war system, which, with the exception almost of Cardinal Fleury, and the earlier days of his royal pupil, a refined, but ambitious and intriguing court had, for more than a century, entailed on them. In the days of Louis the Fourteenth, France, impoverished, though splendid, adulatory, and prostrate, not merely at the feet of the monarch, but of Louvois, saw itself hurled headlong, and with it no inconsiderable portion of unoffending Europe, into a war

of horror and misery unexampled, by the sole hand of that imperious and sanguinary minister. Why? Because his royal master and he differed about the construction of a window!* If other wars did not originate from similar levity, the same insensibility to the miseries of their fellow creatures displayed itself in the conduct of too many of the war ministers of France. To that abominable policy, even the good and œconomical Louis XVI. was forced to give way, and take a part in the American contest. To combat, and, if possible, put down, such a system, was surely wise and honourable; and although the National Assembly not only failed in doing so, but, from the overweening vanity and utter inexperience of their leaders, too soon let loose a thousand evils on their miserable country; the feelings of all, who wished the overthrow of such politics, were not the less right, nor the views of those who, from the first meeting of the States General, were inimical to all improvement whatever, less to be abhorred.

Under the auspices of popular opinion, which seemed at this time to prevail in favour of ex-

* See St. Simon.

tended toleration, the Roman Catholics in Ireland began to look at their own situation in the State, and to entertain hopes, that there was some chance, at least, of its being meliorated. A general committee of that body met early in February* this year; several resolutions from different parts of Ireland were read, and referred to a closer committee. That committee soon after produced a report, which was submitted to the general meeting, and contained, among other matters, the following paragraph: "That, with all humility, they confide in the justice, liberality, and wisdom of Parliament, and the benignity of our most gracious Sovereign, to relieve them from their degraded situation, and no longer to suffer them to continue like strangers in their native land; but thus have the glory of shewing all Europe, that, in the plenitude of power, strength, and riches of the British empire, when *nothing they grant can be imputed to any motives but those* of justice and toleration, the complaints of the Catholics were generously attended to." The conclusion was, "that application should be made for such relief, as the wisdom and justice of Parliament may grant." Lord Fingall presided at this meet-

* February 11th, 1791.

ing; but, some time after his Lordship, Lord Kenmare, and several leading gentlemen among the Catholics, declined attending the committee, not relishing, as it is presumed, the connection which, every day, became more apparent between some of that committee in Dublin, and persons in the north, and elsewhere, whose sentiments were avowedly republican. Many Catholics of great respectability, utterly adverse to any union between such associations and their own body, presented an address to the Lord Lieutenant, expressive of their loyalty, and entire deference to Government, in whose wisdom they expressed their full confidence. Much altercation, much division, now took place, with which these Memoirs have nothing to do. But fair and foul take their share as much in the proceedings of mankind, as in the vicissitude of the seasons. In the midst of all these subordinate and inferior contests, there was a large portion of sober intellect, and genuine affection to the Catholic body, and Ireland, which quietly pursued its way, and, by degrees, opened the door for relief. In forming a connection with Mr. E. Burke, the Catholic gentlemen shewed themselves much adroit negotiators; for a more valuable one with any private individual, could scarcely, at this time,

have been formed. He was their countryman; had, at all times, been a most able and eloquent advocate for the claims of the Catholics; his talents were then at their highest point of perfection, and he had so recently displayed them, in his ever-memorable reflections on the French revolution, that, from being the object of the affected contempt of ministers, he was now their idol; indeed, almost their demi-god. To this justly celebrated man, therefore, they wisely applied. With great ardor, as is particularly well known to those who where acquainted with him, did he engage in any subject which employed his comprehensive mind, and, with peculiar and uncommon warmth, into this most favoured subject, for such it was by him. His son was appointed agent to the Catholics. Their opponents represented him as self-willed, and destitute of all talents. His father, bowing not so much under advanced years, as incurable sorrow for the loss of that only son, has described him as possessing much ability, and graced with many polite acquirements. A generous mind, sympathizing with the afflicted heart, which, in its agony, poured forth such an eulogy, will applaud, not criticise, the brilliancy of its colouring. But his son was, in truth, (for I knew him) possessed of lively parts, of know-

ledge, and accomplishments. Whether he was generally agreeable, in the varied intercourse of life, it is not in my power, from meeting him chiefly at his father's, to say; but in domestic scenes, and respectfully soothing, not opposing the occasional querulousness of a venerable father, he appeared to me extremely amiable and engaging. This gentleman came over to Ireland, and, where party did not interfere, was most cordially received. His father addressed that celebrated letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, in which the claims of the Catholics are discussed with the talents of a master. Lord Charlemont read and admired it. Mr. Burke was his old and intimate friend; their mutual connection with Lord Rockingham had drawn them more closely together; and the sentiments of Burke, in his pamphlets, relative to Whig administrations, and Whig principles, were, with several exceptions however, the sentiments of Lord Charlemont. But, on the subject of the Catholic question, he at all times differed from him; and this difference, at the moment I allude to, rose higher, perhaps, in the mind of Lord Charlemont, from the opportunities which his knowledge of the North gave him of accurately understanding the real motives of many, who, with views very distinct indeed from those

of Mr. Burke, co-operated with the Catholics. Of the foolish, or mischievous designs of such new coadjutors in the Catholic cause, Mr. Burke had been well informed; but hostile in the extreme to general innovation, as all Europe now knows he was, he did not consider such obtruders as of sufficient importance to suspend the proceedings of the friends of the Catholics, or turn aside the expected benignity of the Legislature. "If," said he, "whilst a man is dutifully soliciting a favour from Parliament, any person should chuse, in an improper manner, to shew his inclination towards the cause depending; and if *that* must destroy the cause of the petitioner, then, not only the petitioner, but the legislature itself, are in the power of any weak friend, or artful enemy, that the supplicant, or that the Parliament, may have. A man must be judged by his own actions."

The following letter, which Mr. Burke, Jun. delivered from his father to Lord Charlemont, in Dublin, cannot but be interesting, as it relates to that melancholy separation which had now taken place between two most eminent men; an event always to be deplored, and particularly by those who had once the happiness of witnessing the cordial

unreserved intimacy which subsisted between them:

"Beaconsfield, December 29th, 1781.

"My Dear Lord,

"I have seldom been more vexed, than when I found that a visit of mere formality had deprived me of the substantial satisfaction which Mrs. Burke, and my brother, had, in seeing you as well as they had ever remembered you.—Many things, at that time, had contributed to make that loss very great to me. Your Lordship is very good, in lamenting the difference which politics had made between Mr. Fox and me. Your condolence was truly kind; for my loss has been truly great, in the cessation of the partiality of a man of his wonderful abilities, and amiable dispositions. Your Lordship is a little angry at politics that can dissolve friendships. If it should please God to lend me a little longer life, they will not, I hope, cause me to lose the few friends I have left; for I have left all politics, I think, for ever. Every thing that remains of my relation to the public, will be only in my wishes, which are warm and sincere, that this constitution should be throughly understood; for then I am sure it will be sincerely loved; that its benefits may be widely ex-

tended, and lastingly continued; and that no man may have an excuse to wish it to have another fortune, than I pray it may long flourish in. I am sure that your country, in whose prosperity I include the most valuable interest of this, will have reason to look back on what you have done for it, with gratitude, and will have reason to think the continuance of your health, for her further service, amongst the greatest advantages she is likely to expect.—— Here is my son, who will deliver this to you. He will be indemnified for what I have lost: I think I may speak for this my other, and better self, that he loves you almost as much as I do. Pray tell Lady Charlemont, and the ladies, how much Mrs. Burke, my brother, and myself are their humble servants. Believe me, my dear Lord, with the most sincere respect and affection,

"Your Lordship's
"most faithful, obliged, and
"obedient humble servant,
"EDM. BURKE."

That a communication had taken place between Government and the Catholics, aided,

perhaps, by the intervention of Mr. Burke, was apparent early in the session of 1792, when Sir Hercules Langrishe, a particular friend of Mr. Burke, a commissioner of the revenue, and very able member of Parliament, brought forward a bill for their relief. That bill proposed to give to the Catholics the profession of the law, to permit intermarriages, to take off restrictions on education, and to remove those obstructions to arts and manufactures, that limited the number of apprentices to the Catholics. Sir Hercules' motion for leave to bring in the bill* was seconded by Secretary Hobart.† Of the progress of this bill, which finally received the royal assent, it is unnecessary to treat here; but as some circumstances took place during that progress, materially connected with the general political history of Lord Charlemont, and the Opposition, it is incumbent on me to touch on them as briefly as I can. The Opposition has been represented as taking up this question, for the sake of power and popularity. This statement is the very reverse of the fact. Instead of urging on the question, the members of opposition were much

* 25th January, 1792.

† Now Earl of Buckinghamshire.

divided as to the eligibility of the measure proposed. The first conversation which I recollect to have taken place among some of the members of the Opposition, relative to the Catholics, was at Mr. Forbes's* house. It was in consequence of the intelligence received from England, of the introduction of Sir John Mitford's (now Lord Redesdale) bill. It was said, and indeed it did not require the aid of any political prophecy to state, that the agitation of such a question, in England, would, sooner or later, bring forward a discussion of Roman Catholic claims in Ireland; especially as the French revolution, unstained, at that time,† by the dreadful atrocities which so disgraced it afterwards, disposed many to turn their thoughts towards questions of general political concern, who had never before indulged such contemplations. As therefore, the gentlemen then present had every reason to expect that some question, with regard to the Catholics, would be introduced into the House of Commons, it was for them to consider what part they would take, not as connected with Opposition, but

* The late John Forbes, Esq. M. P. for Drogheda.

† February, 1791.

merely as members of Parliament. It may be necessary to state that Mr. Grattan was not present. The gentlemen who were present, (but few in number,) seemed to pause, as if their minds had been suddenly engaged by a very novel object; and no opinion whatever was given, or declaration made, as to the conduct which they might pursue in Parliament. But I am certain, that this accidental meeting (it was no more) and conversation, led some of those gentlemen to the most serious investigation of the Catholic question; they considered it in every light which it could possibly bear, with regard to present or future times, to Ireland, or to England; and the result of their attention was, a relinquishment of many prejudices; a disposition to hear every thing that could be said in parliament, or elsewhere on the subject; and far more inclination to support the Roman Catholic cause, on some points, that they had before felt, or imagined, perhaps, that they could ever feel. Such is the force of early habit. Several years had now elapsed since any Catholic question had called forth the attention of Parliament; with that body in general the gentlemen now mentioned had no connection whatever, either from consanguinity, habits of society, or politics of any sort. With Mr. Richard

Burke, who came to Ireland this year, some of the Opposition were on terms of intimacy, as they had often seen him in England, where they had the honour of being known to his illustrious father; but no attachment to that great man, as I have already stated, influenced Lord Charlemont; and certainly, it was equally inoperative on Lord Charlemont's friends, several of whom differed from his Lordship on this question.

Sir H. Langrishe's bill has been already mentioned. On the 18th of February, 1792, Mr. Egan, a gentleman of talents, who to great spirit added an honest and feeling heart, presented a petition from several respectable Catholics of the city of Dublin, chiefly commercial gentlemen, stating, "That they humbly presumed to submit to the House of Commons their intreaty, that the representatives of the people would take into consideration, whether some of the civil incapacities under which the Catholics laboured, and the restoration of the *Elective Franchise*, which they enjoyed long after the Revolution, would not tend to strengthen the Protestant state, add new vigour to industry, and afford protection and happiness to the Catholics of Ireland; and that enjoying some

share in the happy Constitution of Ireland, they would exert themselves with additional zeal in its conservation." The speech which Mr. Egan made on introducing the petition, was as measured and conciliatory as any speech could be. However, on the Monday following, Mr. Latouche moved, that this petition should be rejected; and though the House had received it, ordered it to lie on the table, and nothing whatever was intended to be then done, or moved, in consequence of it, his motion was carried by a great majority, for the numbers were 208 to 23. In this minority Mr. Plowden mentions the names of Mr. F. Hutchinson, and his brother, now Lord Hutchinson, Sir Michael Smith, late Master of the Rolls, Mr. Grattan, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Hardy, &c.* An enumeration, which not only shews that the opposition did not set up the Catholic question as a standard of discontent, but at the same time disproves the assertion, that *none* of them ever supported the Catholics till 1793, for that also was maintained.

* Lord Hutchinson, and many other gentlemen who supported the Catholics, never acted with the Opposition as a party, or on any question, save that of the Catholics, merely.

Of Mr. Egan's intention to bring forward this petition, or Mr. Latouche's motion to reject it, the members of the Opposition, till they came into the House, were equally ignorant, and whatever was said by them on the motion for rejection, arose immediately from the occasion, though as to the Roman Catholic cause, it proved to be a most important debate indeed. It is a familiar observation, that considerable events often flow from trifling causes. It was completely exemplified here. A debate which sprung up on the sudden, and in consequence of a motion the least expected, brought out the discussion of the Catholic claims to a far greater length than the gentlemen who supported them could have imagined, or in the slightest degree intended The debate embraced every point, and the concession of the elective franchise, though generally protested against, by no means inspired that dismay, which on the first day of this session it infallibly would have done, if even obliquely proposed. Such are, and ever will be, the consequences of motions, which, with the best intentions on the part of the mover, as was the case here, snatch a hasty and premature opinion from the House of Commons; and then raise up that opinion, thus rapidly obtained, as a certain shade and bulwark, under which the

House may in future repose, and resist all solicitations on the point in question. Not only Mr. Latouche, a most respectable gentleman certainly, and perfectly independent Member of Parliament, but a large portion of the House thought, that this spirited rejection of the Catholic petition, would exile the question of elective franchise from the walls of the House of Commons for generations, perhaps for ever. Alas! what said the very next session? However, notwithstanding the too eager zeal of many on this memorable night, it is but justice to some gentlemen to state, that they were anxious for the withdrawing of Mr. Latouche's motion. From repeated conferences around me, and in the Lobby, I believe that several of the ministerial members, and Mr. Hobart, were of the same opinion. But Mr. Latouche's general support was to them of great value. He did not recede, and they gave away.

I have been thus rather too minute perhaps in the detail of this proceeding, but I know of none more important to Ireland. Every question that has since arisen with regard to the Catholics, may take its date from *this* day.

Lord Charlemont's state of health, at this time,

was indifferent, and the situation of the country by no means contributed to its restoration. He exerted himself however as usual. He visited, or was visited by every one, who, in his opinion, could alleviate somewhat of the public discontent. The French Revolution had, not only at its beginning, but a considerable time afterwards, a warm advocate in him, and he indulged the hope, that the ferment in France, would subside into something beneficial to that kingdom, and ultimately to Europe. He writes thus from Dublin to Haliday:"* Sickness is often the source of acts of charity and benevolence. It softens the mind, checks our ardour, and by restraining us in the course of our usual pursuits, affords us leisure to think of our absent friends, and to bestow on them those favours which hard-hearted health would have refused. All this is very fine, but a vulgar proverb would better have expressed my meaning. It is an ill wind that blows no body good. Such a blast was not your sciatica, to which I am indebted for the receipt and entertainment of your two excellent letters. My malady, alas! is of a far different nature, since, while it increases my wish for a

* May 12, 1792.

friendly correspondence, it deprives me of the power of indulging myself in writing. How then can I possibly follow you in the many points which you have suggested. In truth I cannot. My eyes forbid it, and I must per force comply. The last news from France, even by the French account, is horrible, and alarming to all who wish well to their cause. I have often said, because I have long known that the French populace was savage, and their barbarity is now increased and exalted by anarchy, and a total want of subordination. But despotism will never return, and the bustle will end in freedom, tempered by law,* and in a Constitution far better than that which their philosophers have devised for them. There was never yet a country where Revolution was so indispensably necessary. Its Government was tyrannical, and that too by means of a wide spread, and still increasing Noblesse, brought home to every man's door. No wonder, then, if upon the first opportunity, a nation, so circumstanced, should have rushed beyond the limits of true political wisdom."

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* How completely was the amiable Lord Charlemont mistaken ! !

The following letter, though short, may afford some variety to the reader. The poetry which it alludes to I have not seen, and the great work which he mentions of his friend Haliday, was a Tragedy, which that ingenius man had written, and some time after transmitted to Lord Charlemont for his persual. His friend's agreeable talents were now employed, and with success, in affording him some amusement amidst the multiplying vexations produced by unsteady, and improvident councils, the folly of some demagogues, and the sad scenes which began at this time, though slowly, to open in Ireland.*

"My health and my eyes have been lately much affected, but what is infinitely worse, Lady C. has been alarming ill. Do not be frightened however, since she is now perfectly recovered. After what I have said, their needs no further apology for my leaving you so long unthanked. Your letter, and its inclosure, require indeed all my acknowledgments, but particularly the latter, which shows me what the youth was, who is grown into such a man. I find in it poetry without parade, patriotism without pretence, and piety without cant or superstition. If, however, you should be kind enough to send

* Dublin, June 7th, 1792.

me your *opus magnum*, I am afraid that I must be compelled to make an impertinent condition. Cannot Lady C. be allowed to read it to me? For my weak eyes, joined to the crabbedness of your hand writing, the only crabbedness about you, would, I doubt, prevent my reading in such a manner, and to taste it as I ought."

"Dublin, October 29th, 1792.

"Excellent, my dearest Doctor! I admire your Tragedy, and think that it may hold a first rank among modern performances. But why do I talk of modern? It is truly ancient. The conduct is good, the characters are true, and well supported. The dialogue is excellent, and what in particular pleases me, is, that you have contrived to allot to every principal personage, a language peculiar to himself; an idiom, if I may so call it, by which he is distinguishable. Here is no frippery, no gew-gaw tinsel, no glittering Will o'the Wisp, but all is solid, and poetry in its senses. At the same time, I will by no means say, that there are not passages which might be amended. A faultless poem is, I believe, always a dull one. The last act might possibly be more wrought up, and a few scattered sentences may be liable to criticism. But, upon the whole, it is a good and sound Tragedy. Such are my sentiments,

which, however, I should have delivered with much more certainty, if your cursed cramp writing could have been read with a greater degree of fluency. The feelings evaporate, whilst we are poking out the difference between an R and an N. I have not, however, yet done with it, but, as I have now an idea of the whole, shall, as far as my eyes will allow me, reconsider the particular parts. How vexatious it is, that such a play upon such a subject cannot, I fear now, with propriety, be laid before the public. The proverb says, that truth is not to be spoken at all times. Farewell. Lady C. thanks you for every thing but your hand-writing."

This Tragedy, on which Lord Charlemont pronounces so warm an eulogium, I have never seen ; nor, though sent to London, was it ever printed, or brought on the stage, and, in all probability, for the reasons which his Lordship assigns. But neither at this, nor at any time, has a Tragedy, in favour of general liberty, however noble the sentiments, or poetical the diction, been a constant favourite on our stage. Declamation is not relished, and declamation in such plays, too often over-rules passion. But to proceed. It is pleasing to see this amiable nobleman so agreeably employed, and it was a task

for which he was perfectly qualified. Few men were juster critics than Lord Charlemont; and to the delicacy of his taste he united an urbanity and candour, which rendered his opinions, as to any literary performances that were submitted to him, of real and decisive value. In such occupations, when politics did not interfere, much of his time was engaged. And no portion of it ever hung heavy. Lord Falkland pitied an unlearned gentleman on a rainy day. In that respect, no one could ever have been less an object of his compassion than Lord Charlemont. His spirits, till exhausted by sickness, were uniformly cheerful, and fitted him for the various scenes of life in which he was engaged. Often did he pass from a warm and interesting debate,* to the discussion of the scientific, or critical disquisition at the academy. Such transitions were as agreeable to his friends, as they were without effort on his part, and always of some utility. He was a servant of the public, as well as a fine gentleman. But that malady, which is a

* The old Parliament-House in Dublin, and that where the Irish Academy meets, are situated very near to each other The former in College-Green, the Academy-House in Grafton-Street.

foe to all honourable fame, that ennui, which is laid claim to by many of our modern fine gentlemen, as one of their inalienable prerogatives, formed no part of his composition.

Mr. Burke's correspondence with Lord Charlemont closed in December, 1792. At least I have seen no letters from him, to his lordship, subsequent to that period. There are many who will read, with satisfaction, any account which relates to that extraordinary man. The following is taken partly from Lord Charlemont's hand writing.

"This most amiable and ingenious man was private Secretary to Lord Rockingham. It may not be superfluous to relate the following anecdote, the truth of which I can assert, and which does honour to him, and his truly noble patron. Soon after Lord Rockingham, upon the warm recommendation of many friends, had appointed Burke his Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, wishing probably to procure the place for some dependant of his own, waited on Lord Rockingham, over whom his age, party dignity, and ancient family connection, had given him much influence, and even some degree of authority, and informed him, that he had unwarily taken into his service a man of

dangerous principles, and one who was by birth and education a Papist, and a Jacobite; a calumny founded upon Burke's Irish connections, which were most of them of that persuasion, and upon some juvenile follies arising from those connections. The Marquis, whose genuine Whiggism was easily alarmed, immediately sent for Burke, and told him what he had heard. It was easy for Burke, who had been educated at the University of Dublin, to bring testimonies to his Protestantism; and with regard to the second accusation, which was wholly founded on the former, it was soon done away, and Lord Rockingham, readily, and willingly disabused, declared that he was perfectly satisfied of the falsehood of the information he had received, and that he no longer harboured the smallest doubt of the integrity of his principles; when Burke, with an honest, and disinterested boldness, told his Lordship, that it was now no longer possible for him to be his Secretary; that the reports he had heard would probably, even unknown to himself, create in his mind such suspicions as might prevent his thoroughly confiding in him, and that no earthly consideration should induce him to stand in that relation, with a man who did not place entire confidence in him. The Marquis,

struck with this manliness of sentiment, which so exactly corresponded with the feelings of his own heart, frankly, and positively assured him, that what had passed, far from leaving any bad impression on his mind, had only served to fortify his good opinion, and that, if from no other reason, he might rest assured, that from his conduct upon that occasion alone, he should ever esteem, and place in him the most unreserved confidential trust. A promise which he faithfully performed; neither had he at any time, nor his friends after his death, the least reason to repent of that confidence; Burke having ever acted towards him with the most inviolate faith and affection, and towards his surviving friends, with a constant and disinterested fidelity, which was proof against his own indigent circumstances, and the magnificent offers of those in power. It must, however, be confessed, that his early habits and connections, though they could never make him swerve from his duty, had given his mind an almost constitutional bent towards the popish party. Prudence is, indeed, the only virtue he does not possess; from a total want of which, and from the amiable weaknesses of an excellent heart, his estimation in England, though still great, is certainly diminished. What it was at this

period, will appear from the following fact, which, however trifling,* I here relate as a proof of the opinion formed of him by some of his party. Having dined at Lord Rockingham's, in company with him and Sir Charles Sanders, Sir Charles carried me in his coach to Almack's. On the way, Burke was the subject of our conversation, when the Admiral, lamenting the declining state of the empire, earnestly and solemnly declared, that if it could be saved, it must be by the virtue and abilities of that wonderful man."

Thus far Lord Charlemont. Something, though slight, may here be added. Burke's disunion, and final rupture with Mr. Fox, were atttended with circumstances so distressing, so far surpassing the ordinary limits of civil rage, or personal hostility, that the mind really aches at the recollection of them. But let us view him, for an instant, in better scenes, and better hours. He was social, hospitable, of pleasing access, and most agreeably communicative. One of the most satisfactory days, perhaps, that I ever passed in my life, was

* It does not appear at what period the above was written.

going with him *tête à tête*, from London to Beaconsfield. He stopped at Uxbridge, whilst his horses were feeding, and happening to meet some gentlemen, of I know not what militia, who appeared to be perfect strangers to him, he entered into discourse with them, at the gateway of the inn. His conversation, at that moment, completely exemplified what Johnson said of him; "That you could not meet Burke for half an hour, under a shed, without saying, that he was an extraordinary man." He was, on that day, altogether uncommonly instructive and agreeable. Every object of the slightest notoriety, as we passed along, whether of natural, or local history, furnished him with abundant materials for conversation. The house at Uxbridge, where the treaty was held, during Charles the First's time; the beautiful, and undulating grounds of Bulstrode, formerly the residence of Chancellor Jefferies; and Waller's tomb, in Beaconsfield Church-yard, which, before we went home, we visited, and whose character, as a gentleman, a poet, and an orator, he shortly delineated, but with exquisite felicity of genius, altogether gave an uncommon interest to his eloquence; and, although one and twenty years have now passed since that day, I entertain the most vivid and pleasing

recollection of it. He reviewed the characters of many Statesmen; Lord Bath's, whom, I think, he personally knew, and that of Sir Robert Walpole, which he pourtrayed in nearly the same words, which he used with regard to that eminent man, in his appeal from the Old Whigs to the New. He talked much of the great Lord Chatham, and amidst a variety of particulars concerning him, and his family, stated, that his sister, Mrs. Anne Pitt, used often in her altercations with him to say, "That he knew nothing whatever, except Spenser's Fairy Queen." "And," continued Mr. Burke, "no matter how that was said; but wh ever relishes, and reads Spenser, as he ought to be read, will have a strong hold of the English language.' These were his exact words. Many passages, or phrases, from his own works, abundantly testify, that he had himself carefully read that great poet. His reflections on the French Revolution particularly. Of Mrs. Anne Pitt, he said, that she had the most agreeable and uncommon talents, and was, beyond all comparison, the most perfectly eloquent person he ever heard speak.* He always, as he said, lamented that

* Lord Bolingbroke admired Mr. Pitt, (Lord Chatham,

he did not put on paper a conversation he had once with her. On what subject I forget. The richness, variety, and solidity of her discourse, absolutely astonished him.

But I restrain myself. Before I take leave of this truly eminent man, so long connected with Lord Charlemont, and whose fame, as an author, and philosophic statesman and orator, of the highest rank, is now so established, let me add, (and it is a slight tribute to modest and retired worth to add,) that Mrs. Burke appeared to me a lady of uncommonly mild, gentle, and most engaging manners.

The rejection of the Roman Catholic petition, as already stated, produced new auxiliaries to that cause, which it meant totally to prostrate. Many Protestants who had before opposed, now supported the Catholics. The question was much more a subject of grave and private consideration, than it had ever been before. The

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extremely, but not so much as his sister, Mrs. Anne Pitt. The former, he always termed Sublimity Pitt, and the latter, Divinity Pitt. However, he never, I believe, heard Pitt speak in the House of Commons.

Catholic Committee published a general exposition of their tenets, in which they declared, that the doctrine of, "No faith is to be kept with Heretics," was detested and reprobated by them, not only as contrary to their religion, but destructive of morality, of society, and even common honesty. That the doctrine that Princes excommunicated by the Pope and Council, or by any ecclesiastical authority whatsoever, may therefore be deposed, or murdered by their subjects, or any other persons, was, and is, wicked and impious, and as such abjured, and disavowed by them. That as to any right resulting from forfeited lands, they disclaimed all such, nor admitted any title or claim which was not established by the laws of the land as they then stood; and that, whenever Parliament should restore to them the elective franchise, they desired, that no Catholic should be permitted to vote for members to serve in Parliament, till he had taken an oath to defend to the utmost of his power, the property of the country, as established by the different acts of attainder and settlement. These are the heads of the declaration, and I insert them, as it was at the time much approved of. The sub-commitee also published a letter for general circulation, which was accompanied with a plan for

electing a certain number of delegates throughout Ireland, for the purpose of ascertaining the general sense of the Roman Catholics, as to the measure of the elective franchise, and submitting that sense respectfully to Parliament. In this circular letter they also stated that several independent country gentlemen, lately in Dublin, had frequent consultations for the laudable purpose of re-uniting to the committee, Lord Fingall, and the other gentlemen who had withdrawn from it. That they had received from his Lordship, and the gentlemen who acted with him, the most positive declaration, that they would not oppose the Committee in their endeavours to obtain the emancipation of the Catholics; and that the plan then inclosed was sanctioned by the general Committee, the independent gentlemen, by Lord Fingall, and his friends. The delegates were to meet in Dublin.

The general ferment excited by this letter is well known, and must be ever memorable in the annals of this country. From the language held by most of the grand juries, we should be led to imagine, that the elective franchise never could be conceded to the Catholics. The Catholics made one general replication to the various resolutions against them, which was published by

the committee. After taking notice of the assertion, that "they were a Popish congress, formed for the purpose of overawing the legislature," "they would not descend," they said "to observe on the invidious appellation of a Popish congress; the substantial part of the charge was, their intention of overawing Parliament." They called upon their enemies to point out the word, action, or publication of the Catholics, which could, before rational and dispassionate minds, bear such an absurd and wicked import; that as to exciting tumult and sedition, the complete refutation of such a charge, was the very measure that was made the pretence of bringing it forward; their petition, last session, was rejected with disgrace; and it was insisted, that the petitioners did not speak the sense of the Catholic body; it therefore became necessary to ascertain what the sense of that body was; and what plan, for collecting the general sentiment, could be devised, more peaceable, and efficacious, than bringing, from each county and city of Ireland, the most respectable and intelligent gentlemen, who best knew the wishes of their countrymen, and, from their property, must be most desirous and capable of securing tranquillity? What was the fact? The choice of the Catholics had been universally made, without a single instance of irregularity or disorder.

Much more was stated by the committee; but I only select such leading topics, as may give a general view of the subject, and as they are more remotely or immediately connected with the history of Lord Charlemont. Not to dwell on them, or too slightly to dwell on them, would involve that history in much obscurity. The violence of many persons in Dublin and Belfast, who certainly intermingled themselves with the Catholics, for the completion of their own sinister purposes, disgusted and rendered him more adverse to some popular, as they were called, but, in truth, democratic, meetings, than he had hitherto been.—* "My conscience tells me, that it is much too long since I have written to you; but the same faithful monitor assures me, that I am not in fault. By candle-light I cannot write a line, and the necessity of my health obliges me to spend the greater part of the morning on horseback; so that in those wintry days, short, indeed, is the time when I am able to comfort myself by friendly correspondence; and even this brief space is liable, every day, to be further abridged, by frequent interruptions. This is vexatious; but vexations are become almost habi-

* Letter to Haliday, Dublin, December 3d, 1792.

tual to me. Private business, not of the most pleasant sort disturbs me, and the public is to me a constant sourse of misery; even that love of my country, which used to brighten and illuminate the darkest scenes of my life, has now changed its effect, and spreads a gloom over my prospects. Yet, believe me, I do not despond; there is yet in this country a fund of good sense, which will finally prevail over all the nonsense of the times. Belfast continues to vex me; but *you* are there, and many who think as you do. Activity alone is wanting, and that must and will be called forth by emergency."—Such were the honest opinions of Lord Charlemont.

A parliamentary reform, which would meet the wishes of men of sense, of independence, in every part of Ireland, and particularly conciliate the regards of the North, where the voice of the most respectable of the people seemed to call aloud for that favoured object; such a measure, he thought, would best controul sedition, and give to government and the constitution, the affections of that province. Although his plan did not embrace, or bring within its circle, the Catholic body, at *that* period, yet a House of Commons, elected according to such a plan, and of course in a far more popu-

lar manner, than any representatives whom Ireland had then seen, would, as he conceived, sympathize more with the general mass of the people; would naturally approximate itself to the Catholics, and gradually, when circumstances were more benign, admit them into an entire, or very considerable share, at least, of the Legislature. Nor did such a moment appear to him so remote as it did to others. At all events, he thought that such an incorporation of the Catholics would be attended with far more grace, more efficacy, and real cordial permanency, than it could be, when originating from a House of Commons, constituted as the present was; acting in the midst of doubts, of prejudices, fluctuating councils and unchangeing ministerial influence. Had he been anxious for the restoration of the elective franchise to the Catholics at this time, (and certainly he was not) he must have despaired of the success of a measure, to which the Government, on both sides of the water, the two Houses of Parliament, and the mass of the Protestant interest, seemed to oppose an unvarying hostility. If therefore, it was by many considered as impolitic, by others as impracticable at this juncture, why not resort to, or commence with that remedy, (a parliamentary limited reform) the

advantages of which appeared to be least equivocal, and the immediate success most obvious?

"Man proposes, but God disposes," says the old and just proverb. All prospect of obtaining any thing for the Catholics seemed to have almost totally vanished; yet their cause was advancing with the steps of a giant. The benignity of their Sovereign, as on former occasions, was not wanting to them on this: to that benignity was also added the policy of his Majesty's ministers in England, which now assumed a different shape. A sad gloom began to spread over part of the continent of Europe; the Prussian armies, and the Duke of Brunswick, had not only retired with much discomfiture, but Dumourier had obtained signal victories. If the cause of general freedom had gained a triumph, in the retreat of the invading armies, the chiefs of the Jacobin party now triumphed over liberty itself. Instead of laying the ground-work of rational freedom in France, secured as it then was against all foreign invasion, the leaders of that party murdered their humane monarch, and, drunk with rage and success, seemed to "cry woe" to more than one half of the inhabitants of Europe; a cry to

which, I am afraid, some of the cabinets in Europe, by their temerity, and ignorance of the real state of France, not a little contributed. If ministers were determined on, or could not avoid hostilities with France, in either case they were now obliged to give a calmer attention to Ireland, and to render it less vulnerable. Hence, as is generally said, their countenance, at last, of the Catholic claims, and their support of that very measure, the elective franchise, against which they encouraged the Irish administration to draw forth, wherever it could, the whole force of the Protestant interest. Not more rapidly did the chief of the august house of Brandenburgh fall back, some few months before, on the frontiers of France, than ministers now retired from the proposed overthrow of the Catholic question; leaving those whom they had dragged into the field, unfortunate grand jurors, obsequious Irish cabinet ministers, with all the old machinery of the castle, broken, dissipated, and destroyed. All this was deeply to be lamented; not indeed their recommendation of the measure, but the inauspicious extremes of conduct with which it was accompanied. How could it be otherwise? If ministers think that they can view a great question, in all its relations, at one or two abrupt and

hasty glances, ministers, like other men in such circumstances, will find themselves mistaken. Their policy must, in some measure, share the fate of Penelope's web; the evening will unravel and undo the councils of the morning; and a great work of legislation will often be commenced, never completed. An important political measure was never yet the produce of a hurried, desultory attention. When Hyde, Lord Rochester, an able, but impetuous man, told Lord Keeper North, that he could understand any business in England in the course of a month, "Your Lordship would understand it much better in two," replied the Lord Keeper, with true good sense. This question should have been deeply considered, from the moment of the rejection of that petition which solicited the elective franchise, and not left the sport of every contingency, at a period when France, and a great part of Europe, presented scenes of such variety, that all politicians seemed to be at gaze, uncertain to-day what the morrow might bring forth. Still however, with an opening war and opening discontent in Ireland, to attempt to close that discontent, though with the certainty of being blamed for inconsistency in some respects, was comparative wisdom.

The session of 1793 commenced in January; and the situation of the Catholics was recommended to the attention of Parliament, in the Lord Lieutenant's speech from the throne. Ministers, as I have just stated, now went further than the Catholics themselves proposed or expected. The bill, granting the elective franchise, was warmly supported and combated in both Houses. In the Commons, Mr. Grattan's eloquence and ability, in behalf of that measure, were not inferior to any former display of talent which that gentleman had exhibited on all questions relative to the Catholics; he was truly their uniform friend.—On this occasion indeed, he lamented that the bill had not gone far enough; it had however his support, and that of most of the gentlemen in opposition; Mr. Curran particularly exerted himself in favour of the Catholic cause. But the proceedings of the Lords, on this question, appertain more particularly to this work. Lord Clare the Chancellor, spoke vehemently against the Catholics, and against the bill, but concluded with voting for it. The Duke of Leinster, Lord Donoughmore, the Earl of Granard, a nobleman of high integrity, whose politics were as uniform as they were honourable, the Bishop of Downe, (Dr. Dickson,) Lord Dunsany, gave it the most

unqualified support. The Bishop of Elphin, Dr. Lawe, expressed sentiments worthy of the son of the venerable and enlightened Bishop of Carlisle, of the friend of Paley, and of a truly Christian Prelate. He said precisely, and no more, what Johnson, and almost every eminent moralist, had constantly said, of the whole Catholic code. He was abused for his speech, in the House of Lords, and applauded by the majority of the people of Ireland. Lord Charlemont, who had not altered his sentiments with regard to the concessions to be made, and the proper time of making such concessions to the Catholics, opposed the bill; he also protested against it. But, if he opposed the Roman Catholics at this time, he opposed them with good manners and good nature. Even his refusal of their demands was so gracious, and accompanied with such known integrity of heart, that it conciliated them more than the votes of others in their favour, preceded, as such votes were, by angry and insulting speeches.

It certainly cannot be matter of surprize, that the Catholics of that day, obtaining, as they did, more than they asked for, or, perhaps, even thought of, retired from the doors of Parliament in much ill humour. The versatility of

Parliament, though, I trust, ultimately beneficial to Ireland, was little calculated to inspire their gratitude or veneration ; and, with the vote that conferred the elective franchise, to be told that they were utterly unworthy of any benefit, and that, of all bad measures, it was the worst, was surely a most extraordinary mode of supporting the minister, aiding the Catholics, pacifying the Country, or strengthening the empire. Ever shall I deplore the manner in which this great question was treated, and this great boon conceded ; differently managed, it might have been every thing to the State, and its good effects more rapidly diffused than they are likely to be. But it contains a sanative principle ; it raises the peasant from the ground, and gives him a hold in the state. Those who wish to depreciate every constitutional measure, who, in truth, sneer at every political good, and look only to the " present time," in all their parliamentary speculations, see nothing in the elective franchise, but what *they* term an increased vassalage on the part of the poor voter, and on that of the landlord augmented power. This must be the case in some districts certainly, where one man's property is very extensive, and the surrounding territory almost entirely dependent on him. But property is always changing ; indus-

try, under a wise Government, will be progressive; and, as it proceeds, ignorance and personal thraldom will disappear, and give way to that liberal connection between a land-holder and his tenantry, which every man must contemplate with pleasure. If extensive possessions bear too great a sway in one country, property may be more balanced in an adjacent one; and it can be no inferior consideration to any statesman, to teach the humblest Catholic, that, in looking to the formation of the popular branch of the Legislature, the law entertains the principle of respecting *him*, if he will learn to respect himself. *That* respect, on the part of the Catholic, will be best displayed by a reverence for the existing institutions of his country.

Much has been said of the thirst for entire political power, which prevails in that body; and it is suggested that no means will be left untried to obtain it. If Catholic *aggrandizement* and *superiority* are ever sought for, in any regular legislative mode, the measure must instantly fail; for, though Catholic numbers might, from a concurrence of circumstances, outvote a particular Protestant interest in the Sheriff's court below, what would they generally avail

in the court of Parliament above, constituted as the mass of property now is, with every prospect of continuing so? If foreign assistance is insanely courted, to procure that aggrandizement, the most complete and guilty success that could attend such an appeal, would soon vanish into air. A modern conqueror would listen but a short time to the dreams of hierarchical ambition, or the claims to ancient possessions. He would take care that the hungry auxiliaries who left their own shores along with him, should be amply served; and, compared to them, or his own permanent interest in that state which he would affect to assist, but in truth, subdue, Romish church, or Romish chieftain, would meet no respect whatever. To such connexions both might say, "*Pol! nos occidistis amici!*"* and they would say true; for in such scenes, the modern, or last Catholic, would be worse than the first. There are many persons abundantly ready, on the first cloud that appears in our political hemisphere, or the first suggestion of their own imbecile and sorry fancies, to plunge their country into an abyss of mischief. To such

* Or, according to Pope, "My friends, deuce take you for your pains."

only can I be supposed to address myself here. The good sense of my Catholic countrymen in general, requires no aid from my admonitions.

It has been often said, not merely by those who wish to derogate from the merit of Lord Charlemont, (not many in number) but some of his admirers, that he was rather too fond of popular applause, and, in particular instances, sacrificed somewhat too much to that object. I think I shall not appear his indiscriminate eulogist, when, to this animadversion, I can oppose not only his vote on the elective franchise, but his conduct on various emergencies, when his sentiments and those of his countrymen were not in unison. That on all occasions he sought, and ardently sought their affections, is perfectly true; and if to cherish their regards was an error, we must indeed lament, that more of his rank, equally natives of Ireland, have never been accused of an error so amiable. But, so far from bending his speech to the political fashion of the day, or adopting any unbecoming metamorphosis, to please his countrymen, I confess I know not any one, whose mind and language were more uniformly erect than his were. A conduct, to be applauded in any eminent political character, but in one who was so truly the child

of the people, deserves lasting respect and admiration. If I have endeavoured to do him justice in this point, let it also be extended to Irishmen who differed from him, and who never regarded him with less favourable eyes, even when he most opposed them. As to the mercenaries, whose trade is falsehood and misrepresentation, they, and their employers, are not to be noticed. The approbation of a man's own mind is unquestionably the best he can have; but the well-earned applause of our fellow-citizens is, indeed, grateful. And let it be an encouragement to every honourable man, who treads the road of public life, that such applause can be bestowed on those who oppose, as well as those who more immediately gratify the public wish, when that opposition is known to proceed, as was the case here, from a good heart, accompanied with good manners.

If Lord Charlemont differed from ministers, and many of the opposition with regard to the Catholic bill, he coincided with both as to other public measures, now to be supported by them. Not only did ministers, announce all cessation of hostilities to the so often defeated Place, Pension, and Responsibility Bills, but they condescended to adopt them, in some measure, as their

own, and usher them into Parliament under their auspices. This was doing much, and it seemed to prognosticate a happy change. The good Earl was certainly gratified to the utmost; and particularly when his friend, Mr. Ponsonby,* supported by Mr. Conolly, declared his intentions of bringing forward the great question of Parliamentary Reform. Even to this the ministers, or at least some of their friends, did not seem adverse, but, with a shew of political gallantry, which the House never before witnessed, declared themselves the champions of this forlorn measure, as well as the rest. Some of the country gentlemen could scarcely believe their ears or their eyes: such deeds, or rather such professions of high parliamentary emprise, seemed to carry them back to the days of antique, chivalrous patriotism. "Whence does all this benignity flow?" said Lord Charlemont, at this time, to the author of these Memoirs; "I doubt very much if Monsieur Dumourier ever heard of a parliamentary reform, and yet I am almost tempted to suspect him of having some share in what is now going forward."

* William, now (1806) Lord Ponsonby. He stated what is alluded to here, January 14th, 1793.

With whatever apparent or real benignity Parliament opened, the following letter from Lord Charlemont to Dr. Haliday too plainly shews the state of affairs in the metropolis:

"Dublin, Feb. 26th, 1793.

"My still declining health precludes the possibility of answering your last letter. It ought not, however, to remain wholly unanswered; but I must have patience, and content myself with a few incoherent sentences. I continue to rejoice in the firmness of my friend Ponsonby;* and the more so, as that firmness will one day carry our point. I cannot entirely agree with you concerning the French war;—for a week they were old Romans, and have since been savage Gauls. I exulted in their emancipation, but shudder at its effects, which have put even liberty out of fashion.

"Respecting the Volunteers of this city, they are, alas! no longer what they were. I have, indeed, been their nominal general; but for many years past they have, in no instance, followed my advice, nor have they ever taken it when offered unasked. Their follies have

* As to the Reform.

brought shame on the institution; upon a late occasion their conduct has been absolutely indefensible. No Egyptian hierophant could have invented an hieroglyphic more aptly significant of a republic, than the taking the crown from the harp, and replacing it by the cap of liberty. The corps which adopted this emblem, and gave itself the title of National Guards, was on all hands condemned; yet all my endeavours could not prevail on many other corps to avoid sharing their fate, by adopting them as brethren. Their silly affectation of French summons! French appellations! &c. &c. No man is more likely to err than I am, but I will never be led away with my eyes open; nor shall even the love of popularity ever induce me to deviate from that which my best judgment assures me is right. The anxiety their conduct has occasioned me is beyond expression, and neither my health nor spirits can any longer bear it. Respecting Reform, it will, I fear, be strenuously opposed; yet our numbers will, I trust, be greater than ever. Much will, I trust, be done even in this session, and some good foundation be laid. Pension and place bills will pass, the latter of which is certainly a most desirable object. And now, my dearest friend, adieu!"

With regard to the National Guards, which Lord Charlemont alludes to, the Lord Lieutenant (Earl of Westmorland) and the Council shewed a most proper and becoming spirit. They were immediately put down, and, with the unanimous approbation of the House of Commons.

The Pension and Responsibility Bills, so long the favoured objects of Opposition, and of every moderate constitutional man throughout the kingdom, were brought in, and, after a slight opposition from some of the old courtiers, received the Royal assent at the close of the Session. The Catholic Bill also; but the same fate did not attend the ancient question of Reform. With every indulgence to Ministers, I must say, that their countenance of a question so important at the beginning of a Session, and subsequent abandonment of it, were impolitic in the extreme, and tended to create much and well-grounded discontent throughout the kingdom. There are some questions which should never be played or trifled with. This was one of them. Lord Charlemont, and many of the constitutional and loyal friends of Reform, expressed their severe and bitter disappointment.

A more opportune season for bringing it forward in the Irish House of Commons could hardly have been found. Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Conolly, and other great land proprietors, connected with boroughs, and borough patrons, though formerly inimical to, were now (I know what I write) sincere advocates for the measure. It would have been, and was, in truth, on one or two nights discussed calmly and wisely. Mr. Hutchinson, (the Secretary of State) spoke with much information on the subject,* and changed the opinions of some gentlemen. To say that the demagogues, either in the North or Dublin, would not have been satisfied, is saying nothing, for, certainly, no plan of Reform could have pleased them, but one of their own formation. To wait therefore for their approbation, would have been the waiting of the rustic for the passing by of the river. The river still flowed on, and so would their discontent; but a sincere adoption of some rational plan of Reform must have tended to disarm them, and diminish the number of their adherents, which at this time was by no means great. Some of them acknow-

* See an extract of his speech in the Appendix, which is worth attending to, as it gives, in a short compass, the genuine state of Parliamentary Representation at that time in Ireland.

ledged afterwards, that it would have had that effect. That perverseness which sometimes governs human affairs, was not a little displayed in this business. A Reform, so loudly called for by the People, and so often frowned at by the Castle, was, at this time, when so favourably regarded by the House of Commons, almost entirely neglected by the People. Except a resolution in its favour by the Catholic Convention, all was silent. In districts where the Catholics were disliked, or dreaded, this silence could be accounted for; but the same taciturnity prevailed even where they were most favoured. If the plan had been agreeable to the United Irishmen, or if they had applauded it with the sinister view of obtaining some ground on which, at a future day, they might erect their scheme of universal suffrage, moderate men might, indeed, have naturally shrunk back, and, observing the obliquity of such motives, declined giving any assistance to any Reform, which, however, originally raised as a tower of strength to the state, would, with the aid of such political architects, be soon changed into a tower of confusion, where every language would be spoken save that of the Constitution. But it was not so;—the United Irishmen were, at this time, as silent with regard to a Reform as the rest of the community

in general were. They, indeed, declared themselves perfectly indifferent to any thing the Legislature could, or would do, and recommended a similar apathy to all his Majesty's loving subjects in Ireland

There was much business transacted this Session, and altogether it was an uncommonly important one. Lord Hillsborough (the late lamented Marquis of Downshire) introduced the Militia Bill into the House of Commons, which was generally approved of. The Opposition supported Administration in the prosecution of hostilities which had now commenced, and in questions, such as the Alien Bill, and others which might be expected to take place in the situations which England and France now held, as opposed to each other. With his health rather declining, and his mind in some respects ill at ease, we find Lord Charlemont at the present period in harmony with Ministers. Satisfied, except as to a Reform, with their proceedings, amused and rendered happy by the correspondence and lively talents of his friend.

* "A thousand thanks for your pleasing letter

* Letter to Haliday, Dublin, June 13th, 1793.

and still more pleasing verses; delightful in themselves, and still more to me, when I consider them as a proof that no disagreeable circumstances have been able to overthrow your philosophy, or, as it may be more truly expressed, to prevail over that fortunate flow of spirits with which nature has blessed you. Sometime since I should have attempted, though even then without success, to have answered your epistle in its own style; but alas! ill health has well nigh quenched in me every spark of humour, every poetical effervescence.—But no more of this;—I shall, therefore, conclude with a request, that when you write to the dear Anna and the charming Delia, you will present them with my most truly affectionate compliments, together with my felicitations on their being able to inspire a youth of sixty-five with a spirit of poetry, which would do honour to Catullus. Adieu! Believe me that I shall ever be, what I ever have been since I first knew you, your truly affectionate. "C.

"Though I am weary of politics, I cannot avoid informing you, that our labours have not been entirely fruitless, and that if our success has not been equal to my wishes, it has far, however, exceeded my expectations. The expla-

nation of the Navigation Act, together with its consequences, is a real commercial benefit. The entire cession of the Hereditary Revenue, which is now to be consolidated with the other national funds, and strictly appropriated; and the establishment of a Treasury Board, which will be paid for by the salaries of the useless and alien Vice-Treasurers, will, in effect, nearly answer the purpose of our Responsibility Bill. Respecting Place and Pension Bills something will be done; but to what extent is not yet explained. My hopes, I confess, are by no means sanguine on these heads. Once more adieu!"

In a few days after the date of this letter,* the Earl of Moira† died. He was one of Lord Charlemont's earliest friends, and for many years his parliamentary coadjutor in the House of Peers. He was a scholar, well versed in ancient as well as modern literature; possessed of much and truly useful information, which he communicated with peculiar agreeableness, for his diction was remarkable for its facility and purity,

* Thursday, June 20th, 1793.

† John Rawdon, father to the present Earl of Moira, Hastings, &c.

and his conceptions clear and unembarrassed;—he was a constant reader; in truth, few men of any rank read so constantly;—his studies leaned much to scientific subjects, and those of natural history, which he well understood. He was very conversant also in the polite arts, and his library, to which every one had access, was a noble collection of books, the most useful, as well as the most agreeable. In politics he was a Whig, of true revolution principles, that is, attached to monarchy and the people. From the moment that he first took his seat in the House of Lords, to the close of his life, (a long period) his conduct was that of a truly independent Peer. He often opposed, he never attempted to vilify or debase the Government. With many of the Lord Lieutenants he lived on terms of intimacy or civility; but, I believe, never once asked a favour from one of them. With an elocution the most unembarrased, as I have already stated, but adapted, perhaps, more to society than to public life, and with general political knowledge, he very seldom spoke in Parliament; on one or two occasions he was forced, by idle asperity, to assert himself; he did so, with a just spirit and his usual good manners. In the earlier part of his life he had lived much abroad, or in England,

in the best company of the older part of the court of George the Second, and to his last hour retained the agreeable and polished manners of that society; in this respect it is not easy to do him justice; there was nothing artificial, nothing forced, in his good breeding;—it was a courtesy always flowing, never wearying, directed to every one, but still measured; never losing sight of the humblest as well as the highest in his company, never displaying his rank, and never departing from it. Lord Charlemont used often to say, that he was one of the best bred men of his age. He had, like other men, his foibles, but they were slight, and too often magnified by illiberality, ignorance, and adulation of ministerial power; but there was not one *gentleman* (I lay claim to that word only as our ancestors understood, and limited the use of it) in either House of Parliament, or out of Parliament, who, if acquainted with him, did not regard and respect him. His house will be long, very long, remembered; it was for many years the seat of refined hospitality, of good-nature, and good conversation; in doing the honours of it, Lord Moira had certainly one advantage above most men, for he had every assistance that true magnificence, the nobleness of manners peculiar to exalted birth, and

talents for society the most culivated, could give him, in his illustrious Countess.*

Lord Charlemont truly lamented the loss of this accomplished nobleman; but it pleased Providence to afflict him with one of a far severer nature.—His second son, James Caulfield, a most pleasing youth of seventeen years of age, died the September following. Lord Charlemont's letters express the anguish of his heart, as well as that of the amiable partner in his afflictions, and her consequent indisposition. Such scenes of domestic distress must necessarily engage the sympathy of every reader; but a detail of them would, surely, be as unnecessary as disrespectful.

The borough of Charlemont, although under the immediate influence of the Earl, might be considered, from the unvarying succession of its patriotic representatives, as more the scene of popular election than many places where independence was supposed to be most triumphant.

* Elizabeth, Countess of Moira, Baroness Hastings, &c. in her own right; daughter of Theophilus, and sister to Francis, late Earls of Huntingdon.

Towards the close of this year it was deprived of one of its members, Mr. Richard Sheridan, whose death affected Lord Charlemont very sensibly.

"Poor Sheridan! (thus he writes to Haliday, January 1st, 1794) Indeed his loss has given me sincere concern. Though certainly injured by the sad situation of his health, yet, take him all in all, I shall find it very difficult to replace him as I wish. Never, I am confident, lived a man of better heart, or of more true and genuine honour, and, between us, the *idem velle, atque idem nolle*, was perfectly established. Where then, is his like to be found? I have for some time past thought of nothing else, and have hitherto met only with disappointment. Meanwhile the time presses, and something must be decided. The new year has begun; I am glad of it, for I was heartily sick of the old one. May it be marked with more pleasing events, both at home and abroad, than its disgusting predecessor! Let this be an epoch of returning reason, as the last has been of universal madness."

Richard Sheridan, above-mentioned, was

cousin-german to Brinsley Sheridan.* He was bred to the bar, though without a regular academic education, and possessed, in no slight degree, the talents and dispositions of his family. He had distinguished himself in his profession on some occasions, and, though his fund of general information was too limited to command the uniform attention of the House of Commons, he was always heard with satisfaction. His manner was oratorial, his voice remarkably sonorous and imposing;—he had, at times, much of that thoughtlessness and, what may be called, *étourderie*, which Swift describes as predominating in the character of his grandfather, the celebrated Dr. Sheridan. In his dealings with the world, he was, as Lord Charlemont represents him, a man of the truest honour; and such was the festivity of his disposition, the excellence of his temper, and the peculiar simplicity of his mind, that few men were ever more truly loved and esteemed.

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* Insigne mœstis præsidium reis,
Et consulenti, Pollio, curiæ,
Cui laurus eternos honores,
Dramatico peperit triumpho!

The letter which Lord Charlemont wrote to Mr. Sheridan on offering him a seat in Parliament, is perfectly consistent with all that his lordship ever said on that subject. It does him credit, and, as such, I insert it.

"April 10, 1790.

"DEAR SIR,

"Some characters, as well as some countenances, possess the peculiar privilege of making an immediate and favourable impression. My acquaintance with you has been of short duration, and yet that short acquaintance has been effectual to point you out as the fittest person to execute a trust, which is, in my opinion, the most important that one man can receive from another. Whenever it may be possible that the representation of this kingdom shall be purified, and advantageously altered from its present absurd and unconstitutional course, I shall, with exultation, resign that which some men esteem their property, but will in the mean while endeavour to manage that trust, which I hold for my country, as far as I am able, to her advantage; neither do I think that I can better perform this, according to my ideas, indispensable duty, than by offering you a seat for the borough of Charlemont, your accept-

ance of which will be an obligation to me. Should I be so happy as to form with you this close and important connection, it may be expedient that you should know my general political sentiments, which, as they are clear and simple, I shall be able in a very few words to explain.

"As love for my country is the ruling passion of my heart, and, as our actions are most commonly directed by the ruling passion, I can claim little merit in wishing to act in the manner which I may deem most essentially advantageous to her. I am, in the genuine, and most enlarged sense of the word, a Whig, and consequently am warmly addicted to the party, with whose general principles I most heartily concur; an attachment, which is still further forfeited by friendship, esteem, and confidence on the one hand, and by a distrust on the other, founded upon experience. But I was an Irishman before I was a party man, and, however it might hurt the feelings of my heart, should oppose my best friends, and those whom most I love and honour, if at any time their interests should clash with those of my country. This is my creed, and this I firmly believe to be your's, in which confi-

dence I once more intreat your kind acceptance of my offer; by complying with which request, you will most essentially gratify and oblige,

"Dear Sir,

"Your most faithful,

"And truly affectionate, humble Servant,

"CHARLEMONT."

Mr. Sheridan was succeeded in Charlemont by Mr. Jephson, nephew to the ingenious author of that name, the friend of Garrick, Mr. Malone, and other literary men. Mr. Jephson, the author, was much caressed and sought after by several of the first societies in Dublin, as he possessed much wit and pleasantry, and, when not overcome by the spleen, was extremely amusing and entertaining. He was a member of the House of Commons of Ireland, and died not long since.

"The Borough of Charlemont" (his Lordship writes, January 23d, 1794) "elects Richard Jephson, a young man of excellent talents, and, as far as my strictest investigation can fathom, of sound principles. How far any untried man may succeed, is a matter of mere hazard; but the peculiar cast of his abilities, joined to much diligence, and great ardour,

gives him, I think, an excellent chance. It is, besides, my opinion, that almost the only good effect which can be derived from the present absurd system of borough representation, is the possibility of bringing forward young men, who may become useful to their country, but who, without this resource, would probably be condemned to waste their sweetness on the desert air."

The two following letters should have preceded what has been just given.

"Dublin, 19th November, 1793.

"Success has attended your patriotic wish. Immediately on the receipt of your official letter, I communicated its contents to Lord Hobart; and, principally in consequence of your representation, a proclamation has issued, requiring ships from the West-Indies to perform quarantine. Thus have you kindly put it in my power to be in some degree instrumental in saving my country from the horrors of external malady; and would to Heaven you could equally enable me to check the course of internal disorder! The principal aim of your literary society, is undoubtedly excellent, and worthy of Belfast in her golden days; but, if politics should interfere, and in the present agitated state of my

still-beloved town, it will be difficult to prevent such interference, I most sincerely join with you in thinking, that the good purpose of the institution will be disappointed. The present cast of politics is a foe to letters, as will, I fear, too soon be exemplified in the fate of the incomparable Condorcet.—Apropos, have you read the pamphlet, signed Jasper Wilson? It appears to me one of the best that ever was written. The Calm Observer, too, is an excellent composition; but it is too long, and though its flowers be often exquisitely beautiful, it is, perhaps, too flowery. Of this last, however, I speak from a partial knowledge, as the print is too small for me to read it, and part of it only has been read to me.

"Dublin, December 4th, 1793.

"—— It is impossible not to love O'Neill.* His very mistakes spring from amiable qualities, and that milkiness of disposition, which steals upon our affections, is, at the same time, the cause of his too great pliancy: I was once honoured with his confidence.

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* John, late Earl O'Neill, father to the present Earl. A more amiable man never existed.

"Whoever attributes Jasper Wilson's pamphlet to more than one writer, must, in my opinion, be wholly mistaken; there is in it an integrity of style and manner which could never be the result of association. I still greatly prefer it to the Calm Observer, which is too long, too complex, and, in some places, not free from sophistry. The preface is, indeed, a master piece, but the work itself often languishes, and is in some degree liable to the strong objection of not compelling its reader to persevere in the perusal. It is not, however, the work of the noble Lord; I know him well, and he is incapable of it. It may be, indeed, and I believe is, of his school."

As the preceding session had been remarkable for its length and importance, the present one, (1794) was equally remarkable for its brevity, and, indeed, nothingness. One circumstance, however, distinguished it, which can by no means be passed over. Mr. Ponsonby,* on the 4th of March, moved that his bill, for improving the representation of the people, should be read a second time the next day. The

* William, late Lord Ponsonby.

2d of August, according to the unsual style of ministerial amendments, was proposed, instead of the morrow, and carried by a large majority of 142 to 44. In the course of the debate, Mr. Grattan, with peculiar energy of argument, combated the plan of individual representation, or universal suffrage, which had been held out, accompanied by annual parliaments, as the unfailing remedies for all grievances, and all abuses whatsoever. The limits and the object of this work do not permit me to insert Mr. Grattan's speech, but it deserves an attentive perusal. One or two sentences cannot be omitted. "To destroy the influence of landed property, is the object of individual representation; but its immediate effect would be to extinguish the people. The rich might for a time make a struggle, they might in some places buy a mob, who, by such a plan, would be all electors. The minister too, for the short time such a plan suffered king or minister, could, in the corrupt confusion of such election, preserve some influence by the application of the treasury, and the command of the army. But the farmer and the citizen could have none of those advantages. With this plan of personal representation, a revolution of power would lead speedily to a revolution of property; for, if you transfer the power of the state to

those who have nothing in the country, they will give themselves your property. The first ordinance then of such a plan, would be robbery, accompanied with the circumstances incidental to robbery,—murder." The framers and promulgators of this plan felt the strength and poignancy of these observations, which exposed the folly of some, and unmasked the projects of others. It is said, that at this time, some men who were scholars, amiable in society, and of refined talents, belonged to the association of United Irishmen. I can believe it. But though they did not engage in the treasons of others, their speculations and theories carried abundant mischief with them. I should dismiss the subject at once, and leave it to the general histories of this period, if, as the biographer of Lord Charlemont, I was not obliged to record, not only the existence of such talents, noxious always without experience, but also the perverseness of some of the ministerialists, who, in their way, were as mischievous as the theorists, blended Lord Charlemont, his friends, and all who opposed administration, in one general mass, and despoiled government of much of its energy, by their undistinguishing censures and hostility. Thus the press, whether it teemed with the inflated language of United Irishmen, or the

denunciations of the court, became almost a nuisance, and in the very address to which I have alluded of the United Irishmen, it was declared. "that the speeches and debates of the opposition were regarded by that association with perfect indifference, and consequently, by all whom it could influence." Yet at this time, and session after session, till Parliament itself, "like an insubstantial pageant," faded away, and was no more, the half, of what the yet remaining courtesy of the House of Commons called debate, was employed in charging all the opposition, Lords and Commons, with misleading the populace by speeches, which were industriously kept from them, and which the great leaders of the populace never read, and openly declared their contempt of. It is not pleasant to look back to such scenes, and the reader cannot be more tired of them than I am myself. As to universal suffrage, it seems, as far as I can judge, very generally abandoned at present; and, indeed, it is difficult to conceive how it could be entertained for any length of time, by any persons who considered not the genius of the British Constitution merely, which is totally adverse to any such system, but the genius and propensities of mankind.

The conversations in Lord Charlemont's library, did not turn now so much on books and literature as formerly. Far less agreeable topics were reluctantly but necessarily discussed there. His spirits, however, received at this time, a considerable, though temporary improvement by the noble victory of Lord Howe, which, with other matter, is alluded to in the following letter:

"Dublin, June 23, 1794.

"Never, sure, was any thing more seasonable than the arrival of your exhilarating letter. Half a year older than I am! Why, man, you are ten years younger. The French fleet, undoubtedly, fought well, but not, surely, from having got rid of their nobility; a set of men, who, though no favourites of mine, were brave, spirited, and animated by a point of honour, which is now replaced by a spirit of enthusiasm. If any thing could add to my joy for so important a victory, it would be the deserved credit which Lord Howe has thereby obtained; whose conduct, as well as courage, have scarcely been paralleled. I have known his whole family for many years, and to have known them, is in other words, to say that I have loved, and highly respected them. Yet was this the man, whom a parcel of ignorant, lazy lubbers dared

to impeach by the fire-side.——Washington is, indeed, a man, whose lustre would be alone sufficient to irradiate the darkest age. If Mr. Pitt does not take advantage of the time allowed him, he will certainly be answerable for all the consequences. But I really hope these matters will be amicably adjusted. You gave me great pleasure, by telling me that Brownlow* is better. Conolly,† with whom you wish to be acquainted, is a man of excellent heart, and a good share of whimsical parts; he has, however, great oddities, and his conversation not always equal to his talents. He has one quality, which will with you, I am confident, weigh much to his advantage; he loves me, I really believe, with great sincerity. Lady Louisa is a paragon of excellence.‡ Mobs are, in general, by no means pleasant; but that of

* The Right Honourable William Brownlow.

† The late Right Honourable Thomas Conolly, brother in law to the Duke of Richmond, and nephew to the Earl of Strafford. He represented the county of Derry in the Irish House of Commons, and was also a member of the British Parliament for many years. He was a most honest man. His magnificent House, at Castletown, where he so long exercised the truest hospitality in the noblest manner, deserves to be held in lasting remembrance.

‡ Lady Louisa Conolly, sister to the late Duke of Richmond.

London, to the mob of Paris, is an assembly of polite philosophers. I have a curious article of intelligence, in a letter of excellent authority, from London. Among the other wonders of this wonderful war, there is none more surprising, than that, in their perpetual change of generals, every new man seems to act just as well as his predecessor. The fact is, that at the Revolution, the corps of artillery, certainly the best corps in France, adhered to the Revolutionists. From among those have been selected sixteen, who form the council of war, and four of these are continually sitting. They have before them maps of the various theatres of war, maps drawn by their former great engineers, so perfectly correct, that they see, at a glance, every spot of the country. Over these they fight their battles; and couriers, constantly in waiting, convey their orders to the generals, who have thus no latitude allowed them. In some of the late actions, the prisoners taken by us did not know their general's name; but only said that, as they heard, he was newly appointed. By these means, all commanders are alike, and none is enabled to make a powerful party in his army."*

* The authenticity of this intelligence, has, I am told, been denied.

Towards the middle of July, Lord Charlemont proposed going to Belfast, and reviewing the Volunteers there; but I know not what numbers then appeared under arms; and the institution was now fading fast away. During the course of this month, a large addition was made to the British cabinet, and such parliamentary strength given to the minister, as he had never before, even in the fulness of all his power experienced. The Duke of Portland, Lord Spencer, Lord Fitzwilliam, Mr. Windham, and others, who not only differed from Mr. Fox, as to the propriety of the war with France, but were most ardent in its prosecution, accepted official situations, and became cabinet ministers. The influence of these arrangements was, of course, immediately felt in Ireland, and a change in the Lieutenancy was confidently talked of. The management of Ireland had, according to the general supposition, been given to the Duke of Portland; and this, it is said, was one of the first points conceded by Mr. Pitt, on the formation of this new coalition. Mr. Grattan and Mr. Ponsonby were sent for, by some of their friends in England. They went there, and every thing seemed to announce some alteration in the Irish Viceroyalty. Lord Fitzwilliam was very early spoken of as

the New Lieutenant. The prospect of such appointment was truly acceptable to Lord Charlemont. The character of Earl Fitzwilliam, his princely fortune in this country, which he inherited from his revered uncle, the Marquis of Rockingham; all these circumstances were, to Lord Charlemont, peculiarly grateful. But it appears, from his letters, that great doubts hung on Earl Fitzwilliam's appointment.

In the course of the autumn, his friend Haliday was called upon to attend Mr. Brownlow,* at his seat at Lurgan, in the county of Armagh; and to that truly respectable gentleman's illness the three subsequent letters chiefly allude:

"Dublin, October 18th, 1794.

"Many thanks, my dearest Doctor, for your intelligence, disagreeable as it is. Anxiety is, perhaps, a worse pain than the certainty of ill; and yet, so whimsical is our nature, we are always apt to prefer the former to the latter.

* The late Right Honourable William Brownlow, Member for the county of Armagh, in Ireland. He was father to the present Countess of Darnley, the Vicountesses Powerscourt and De Vesci, &c.

Whilst there is life, there is hope; and however bad your account may be, I will not despair. Indeed, in the present dearth of good men, we could ill afford the loss of one so excellent: at all events, he will have every succour that art can give; and the firmness and excellence of his own mind will not only aid the efforts of his physician, but, if the worst should happen, help to console his friends. Our unaccountable uncertainty respecting Lord Fitzwilliam still remains."

"Dublin, October 27th, 1794.

"Thank you for your last bulletin, which was somewhat consolatory—but I fear—Alas! poor Brownlow; when shall we see his like again? A thousand qualities of head and heart had raised my affectionate regard on the true basis of esteem; and now his dying goodness towards me has changed that affection into real tenderness.——That Caulfield* should represent the county, must undoubtedly be my warm wish, but he is not of age; at the general election, I meant to offer him to the favour and protection of his country. Some pretensions he has;

* Lord Caulfield, now Earl of Charlemont.

he is naturally honest; educated in the principles of real patriotism; and his father has not been an absolutely idle citizen. Pardon me, if I be too presumptuous; it is in behalf of a son."

"Dublin, October 20th, 1794.

"This morning has brought me your short but mournful letter, every line of which teems with regret. Such is the lot of man! and the only consolation the survivors can expect, must consist in the enjoyment of that reputation, which our departed friend has left behind him. *Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei vitabit libitinam,* is not only an incentive to virtue, which Heaven itself has impressed on our minds, but a real comfort in that greatest of misfortunes, the loss of those we loved and esteemed."

It is impossible for any one who sat and voted with Mr. Brownlow, for several years in Parliament, to pass over his death without offering some tribute to his memory. His ancestors had, for more than a century, represented the county of Armagh, and he himself became one of its members very early in life. His election was not only severely contested, but became afterwards the source of a most notable trial of parliamentary strength between Primate Stone and

Mr. Boyle. Mr. Brownlow had been espoused by the former. The only question regarded, at that time, in the Committee of Elections, was, whether the petitioner or sitting member was most favoured by those who had most parliamentary influence. Nothing else was thought on. This was indecorous in the extreme; but it was not an indecorum of which our House of Commons had monoply, as, till Mr. Grenville's bill, something of a similar profligacy prevailed in St. Stephen's chapel. The division on the Westminster election first shook, and that on the Chippenham contest removed Sir Robert Walpole.* To this field of battle then, this parliamentary Philippi, if I may be allowed the phrase, the opposing chiefs always resorted, and decided their pretensions to power. The Primate carried Mr. Brownlow's election, I think, by one vote, in a very full House; the struggle was violent. Mr. Brownlow retained his situa-

* In an interview with Mr. Pelham, then Minister, Mr. Dodington frankly acknowledges, that he (Mr. Pelham) could turn out two or more gentlemen, on a petition, notwithstanding their undisputed election at a particular Borough, or even County. They were Dodington's Parliamentary friends. I quote from memory. See his Diary.

tion upwards of forty years, and was one of the most independent members that ever sat in the House of Commons of Ireland. Whenever he spoke, he was heard with peculiar attention and respect. To oratorial powers he laid no claim; but he delivered his sentiments with uncommon perspicuity, great neatness, great elegance, and, occasionally, with a tempered fire and spirit, which were felt by every one around him: he never spoke at any length. With the rules and proceedings of the House he was well acquainted; and had so general a knowledge of parliamentary affairs, that, on the resignation of the Speaker's chair by Mr. Ponsonby, he was proposed to succeed him, and very nearly obtained it. He had many accomplishments; music he understood accurately, and the agreeable opera of Midas* was, in some measure, planned, the airs rehearsed, and altogether prepared for the stage, at his house. With the acquirements of the men of rank and fashion of his day, he had their manners, which were more polished than familiar; but that

* This original and very popular Opera, was written by Kane O'Hara, Esq. a man of talents and genius.

deportment, which was serious and dignified, contributed not a little to the gentleman-like air, and agreeable solemnity, which formerly distinguished the House of Commons. It has long since vanished.

Doubts still continued as to Lord Fitzwilliam's coming over. Lord Charlemont's anxiety was increased to the utmost: he was perfectly satisfied with the conduct of his friends who had gone to England; but the agreeable expectations which he entertained from the arrival of the new Viceroy, were extremely damped by the coldness which prevailed in part of the North, and the indifference with which they regarded any change of Lord Lieutenants. If the system meant to be pursued was precisely the same as that which had preceded it, or slightly varying, such indifference would have been very natural; but the people had no reason whatever to imagine that such would be the case; the character alone of the persons who went from Ireland forbade it. They certainly were not negotiators at a congress for the general pacification of Europe; but though they could not close the war, they might perhaps, be enabled to close the internal differences, or at least, many of the wounds of their own country. If all could not be done,

yet something might be done. But the truth is, that some of the leaders of the United Irishmen, whose sole object was an Irish republic, regarded any measure that had the least tendency to conciliate, or amend our condition, with as much abhorrence as others contemplated it with satisfaction. Hence the diffusion of their own spleen among the people. The name of a popular Lord Lieutenant was odious to them, as it tended to weaken their interest in confusion. The old Castle adherent, who would have risqued any perpetuation of abuses, for the sake of his place, detested a change of system as much as the United Irishmen; he was, in truth, as was said of Pompey, *Occultior, non melior;* for both, in different ways, would have sacrificed their country for their own purposes. Too many of the people, with their usual and sad facility, lent a willing ear to both; it cannot, therefore, be wondered at, that Lord Charlemont had much chagrin, joined to much satisfaction.

"Dublin, November 28th, 1794.*

"The precise terms on which the accommodation has taken place, are not yet known to me;

* To Dr. Haliday.

but I am thoroughly convinced that Lord Fitzwilliam would not accept, nor our friends engage themselves, without such concessions as will be honourable to the country, he is sent to govern; and you will, I doubt not, find that our negotiators have acted throughout with honour, particularly the Ponsonbys, who will, I believe, be found to have risqued a situation, of all others to them the most desirable, rather than consent to any compromise, by which this country was not essentially served. If such shall be found to be their conduct, public gratitude is most certainly their due; of which if they are deprived, the people will be to blame, and unworthy of their service. But, alas! what, in this country at least, is public gratitude? A sudden emotion, which scarcely ever outlasts the benefit, and is sunk into its contrary, by the first popular whim. Yet, surely the people act against their own interest, in suffering patriotism to be its own reward; though, in my opinion, no guerdon can be greater than the blessing of self-approbation. This sentiment, I fear, will not be universal."

At length Earl Fitzwilliam arrived in Ireland, on the 14th of January, 1795, and Lord Charlemont once more appeared at the Castle. It has been often, too often, confidently asserted, that

the party with which Lord Charlemont co-operated, was in fact, nothing more than a mere postcript, and humble adjunct to the great opposition in England, which, on every momentous question, was consulted, and nothing done in Ireland without the concurrence of the English leaders. It is necessary to notice this charge of party, at the period we have now entered on. The opposition here, as it was said, followed Mr. Fox implicitly. That great Statesman opposed the war. The minority in Ireland supported it. Earl Fitzwilliam did not come here from the Cabinet of Mr. Fox, but Mr. Pitt. Lord Charlemont's sentiments did not coincide with Mr. Pitt's in many respects, yet he thought, that with candour and liberality to Ireland, on the part of that minister, much good might be effected. For the persons and principles of the Whig party, the leaders of opposition here, had, indeed, a strong and well-founded predilection; and when the Duke of Portland, under whom the settlement of 1782 was made, came into office, they naturally looked for the adoption of some measures beneficial to Ireland. Such were their sentiments in the autumn of 1794. Any thing that has since taken place cannot at all destroy the propriety of such sentiments at that time. Deeply indeed did they

lament that Mr. Fox was not one of his Majesty's ministers. But that most eminent, honourable Statesman, had good reasons for his conduct, with which, except as general members of the empire, the Irish gentlemen I have mentioned had nothing to do. Their first duty was to attend to Ireland, and by serving Ireland to serve England. According to this mode of thinking did they act, and by their proffered councils, when called on, contributed to bring Lord Fitzwilliam to Ireland. In those councils Lord Charlemont had no immediate share; but there was no person, whose co-operation they, or, I believe, Lord Fitzwilliam, considered as so indispensably necessary. It is scarcely possible to give any narrative of Irish parliamentary affairs, without endeavouring, at least, to clear it of that misrepresentation which has clogged almost every part of it since 1782, particularly at this juncture.

The reader must certainly have always greater satisfaction in hearing Lord Charlemont than his biographer. The two letters which follow, display far better than I can, his feelings as to Earl Fitzwilliam, and his gratification in the appointments which were made, almost immediately after his arrival.

" Dublin, Jan. 10th, 1795.*

" What is become of you, my dearest doctor? I have not heard from you the Lord knows when. Mine was, certainly, the last letter, but hang etiquette! Well, the wished-for change has, at length, taken place. I cannot avoid flattering myself, that we have now got a chief governor, who comes over with the best intentions, and the strongest desire of doing us all the good in his power. Already we have had a foretaste, and earnest of his administration. Regardless of ministerial influence, or convenience, he has restored the University to its rights, and has placed at the head of the Church, a Prelate, not from recommendation, but from character, and whose unassuming conduct, virtue, principles, and erudition, have alone recommended him to that high office. In both these appointments public utility has alone been considered. Murray,† could possibly have had no protection but his own intrinsic merit, and Newcombe,*

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* To Dr. Haliday.

† The Reverend Doctor Murray, late Provost of Trinity College, Dublin.

* The Right Reverend William Newcome, late Archbishop

had no English patron but Charles Fox. From such commencement, it would be uncharitable, and even foolish, not to indulge the most sanguine hopes, both with respect to him, and his principal advisers. And here I cannot avoid repeating, what I have often inculcated, that much public gratitude is due, and ought, in propriety and policy, to be paid to the Ponsonbys, who have hitherto acted a manly, consistent, and disinterested part.

" Dublin, Jan. 31st, 1795.*

" I have been, and am, extremely ill, my dear Doctor; ever since that unlucky accident by which I was so long deprived of air and exercise, those necessaries of life on which I live full as much as meat and drink, I never have known a moment's health. In a word, the above-mentioned privation of that by which my health was sus-

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of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland. A most learned and amiable prelate, who, by the excellence of his conduct, and benignity of deportment, conciliated the regard of all parties. Mr. Fox was truly attached to him. His Grace had been tutor to that eminent man, when Mr. Fox was student at Hertford College, Oxford.

* To Dr. Haliday.

tained, seems to have accelerated the progress of old age; and though not above half a year older, I am ten years weaker than I was. This change has happened too, at a time, in all respects, the most inconvenient, when, on the one hand, the present very alarming situation of affairs may very possible render necessary for me, exertions which I may be no longer able to make; while, on the other, the only hopeful administration I have yet seen, strongly invites me to join all my efforts in behalf of that which I verily believe to be their principal object, the public weal. I may be mistaken, my dearest Haliday, and my sanguine hopes may be deceived; but I really think we have a chief governor, whose warmest wish is to do us all the good he can, and whose powers, if not equal to all we would wish, will most certainly enable him to be of the greatest service to this ill-treated country.

"The Lord Lieutenant met Parliament the 25th January. Mr. Grattan, (a novel circumstance,) moved the address in the House of Commons, which was carried without a division. The same harmony prevailed in the Lords. The Catholics of the city of Dublin presented a petition by the hands of Mr. Grattan, praying a repeal of

all the penal and restrictive laws then affecting the Catholics of Ireland. Various petitions followed them from every part of the kingdom. Mr. Grattan obtained leave to bring in a bill for their relief. There were but three negatives to the resolution. Every thing as yet announced a tranquil and happy session. But, as usual, the parliamentary horizon was soon clouded. For several days previous to the 26th of February, a rumour had prevailed that the British ministry was adverse to the proceedings of the Irish cabinet; *that* rumour soon after added, that the Lord Lieutenant's recal was determined on, and before the 26th, all uncertainty was at an end, and his intended removal was generally known, but not formally avowed in Parliament. On the 2d of March, Sir Laurence Parsons* expressed his concern at the rumoured change of Lord Lieutenant, which he deprecated as a great national evil. "If the British Cabinet," he said, "had agreed to the Catholic measure, and then withdrew their support from it, and with it Lord Fitzwilliam, the Dæmon of darkness could not have done more mischief. If the Irish cabi-

* Sir Laurence, at that time Member for the King's County in Ireland. He is now, (1807) Earl of Ross.

net had brought forward the Catholic question, without the actual concurrence of the British ministers, that Cabinet was certainly highly responsible." He then moved, that the words in the money bill should be changed from the 25th of March to the 25th of May. He was well seconded by Mr. Duquery, but the motion was opposed by Lord Fitzwilliam's particular friends, as tending to excite alarm. Mr. Conolly then moved, that Earl Fitzwilliam had, by his conduct, since his arrival, merited the thanks of the House, and the confidence of the people. This passed unanimously. A similar motion was made in the Upper House, by the Duke of Leinster, but their Lordships were, on this occasion, better courtiers than the Commons, and it did not pass with quite so much harmony. This very succinct account of what passed in parliament, on this eventful occasion, cannot be passed over, without doing some justice to Sir Laurence Parsons and Mr. Duquery.* Never did two men

* The late Henry Duquery, Esq. a member of the House of Commons, and one of the principal ornaments of the bar in Ireland. An uninterrupted friendship of more than thirty years subsisted between him and the author of these memoirs, by whom he must ever be lamented. His friendship would have done credit to any one, for never yet existed a man of

act more disinterestedly. For Lord Fitzwilliam they entertained the truest respect, but they stood aloof from his administration, so far merely, as not to support the war; but, on the great question of the Catholics, they were prepared to uphold him; and when his Lordship was removed, they paid every tribute to the high honour, and undeviating probity of his conduct. The following words of Sir Laurence Parsons can never be forgotten. "I never witnessed such ominous infatuation as that by which the Minister is led. If he perseveres, the army must be increased to myriads, and every man must have five or six dragoons in his house." When he said this, he spoke like an honest, and, indeed, prophetic Statesman. Thus, in two months, closed the administration of Earl Fitzwilliam. That administration, as long as Ireland cherishes integrity, or a love of concord, and national unanimity, must be remembered with gratitude and respect. It did much, and

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sweeter manners and higher honour. His talents were of no common rate, and admirably adapted to business; united as they were to superior clearness, and perspicuity of intellect. He was nephew to Mr. Hutchinson, father to Lord Hutchinson, and died, truly regretted, a few years since.

had it been so permitted, would have done much more. The negotiation relative to Lord Fitzwilliam's acceptance of the Viceroyalty, and the Catholic claims, an event, in which Lord Charlemont was no way concerned, cannot be entered into here. It belongs to another place. Indeed, from Earl Fitzwilliam's letters to Lord Carlisle, and several other documents, few measures of such importance have been attended with more publicity.

But it is of consequence, at all times, that openness and candour should accompany ministerial instructions to persons in high, responsible situations, particularly, indeed, where not only the immediate tranquillity, but the happiness, for ages, of a great nation may be deeply involved. No event almost within the last century, convulsed Ireland more than this abrupt and unfortunate recal. Lord Charlemont often, and in terms the least measured, declared, that it was utterly ruinous. *His* opinion was not influenced by the sudden dereliction of the Catholic question. But he well knew, that to the discontents of the Catholics, and the mortification of the hopes of every constitutional man throughout the kingdom, would be added, the malign joy of each agitator,

and fomenter of discord, to whom such an event as this would, of all others, convey the most untoward satisfaction. He well knew that the cry would soon be raised, and louder than ever, against British influence, and he had less now to oppose to that cry, than he had two months before. He well knew that no pencil would be wanting to depict the British Cabinet sending forth good Viceroys, or good ministers to Ireland, and then instantaneously bidding them disappear.

> "Shew its eyes, and grieve its heart;
> Come like shadows, so depart."

To Mr. Forbes and Mr. Ponsonby he said, "In spite of every wicked machination, we had the mass of the people with us last New Year's Day; and, if we do not make some exertion, next Christmas Day may see them in the hands of the United Irishmen." That Lord Fitzwilliam's Viceroyalty would have banished all discontent I cannot suppose; but that, if the Catholic claims had then been settled, or some parliamentary reform taken place, rebellion would not have reared its head, I am willing to believe. To arrange a Catholic question, and a reform, in such a manner as not to injure the

Constitution in church or state, would have required the abilities and knowledge of the most provident and intelligent politicians. A very extensive reform, with the aid of the elective franchise, as granted two years before, would alone have operated a far greater change, than could be at all wished for. Yet a limited one would not have satisfied. In short, a season of more complicated political difficulty than the present has seldom presented itself.

Before I dismiss the subject of Earl Fitzwilliam's administration, let me be permitted to add, that, as that nobleman had, to make use of the words of the House of Commons, by his conduct merited the confidence of the people, his personal deportment was such as to gratify, to the utmost, all who approached him. The day of his departure from the Castle of Dublin cannot be effaced from the memory of those who witnessed it. A versatile and unprincipled courtier, a furious bigot, a mischievous enthusiast, or unrelenting rebel, might have beheld that departure, and the emotions of the multitude, with smiles and with complacency. But as he was on the point of embarking for England, the indignatiom and concern which sat on the countenances of the crowds which sur-

rounded him, most feelingly displayed the downfal of their noblest hopes, and the truth of the Roman adage, as applied to Ireland;

"Breves, et infaustos populi Romani Amores!"

Lord Camden succeeded him. Some of the unpleasant circumstances that attended his arrival, and the departure of his predecessor, are taken notice of by Lord Charlemont, in the following letter to Dr. Haliday:

"Dublin, April 2nd, 1795.

"If you had not already seen the letters to Lord Carlisle, I should have sent you copies of them, as it would have been painful to me to suppose, that the man whom I love and esteem, was not fully vindicated in your opinion, and vindicated I am sure he must be, by the slightest perusal of their astonishing contents. The departure of Earl Fitzwilliam was, as it ought to have been, solemn and mournful. Never did I see so well-regulated a mob, if mob it could be called, which chiefly consisted of decent, and well- dressed people. The day before yesterday his successor arrived, and his arrival was, they tell me, marked with no small degree of riot. The clangor of trumpets could scarcely drown

the hissing of the people. Many windows were broken; several very foolishly in the Custom-House, where a man is said to have been killed. The Chancellor, it is said, was pursued by a parcel of blackguard boys, and putting his head out of the window to order his coachman to drive on, some little David hit this Goliah on the forehead with a stone. The hurt is of no consequence, but the vulgar tale is, that the surgeon assured him, that if the stone had been better directed, and thrown with more force, he might have been seriously wounded. A patch is, however, a badge of honour at Court. The Speaker's windows were broken, and some of the rioters were taken, and the remainder speedily dispersed by a party of cavalry. All this, however, though not surprizing, is extremely disagreeable. P. S. A Proclamation has issued, in which the Primate's coach is said to have been attacked. It was indeed attacked, but by mistake, and the mob, finding their error, instantly apologized. I hear of no houses assaulted, but the Speaker's, the Custom-House, and the Chancellor's. For all this I am really sorry, especially as it happened on the occasion of the Lords Justices delivering up their sword to the new Lieutenant. Mobs, moreover, are bad things, and ought to be discouraged by every well-wisher to the public weal."

Mr. Pelham, who had been Secretary to the Earl of Northington, was now appointed Secretary to Lord Camden. At any other time he would have been acceptable to Lord Charlemont. The same may be said of the new Viceroy. There were but few of the chief men in opposition, who had not listened with pleasure to the lively, simple, and energetic eloquence of his venerable father, the friend of Lord Chatham! No one admired the good old Earl Camden more,* as I well know, than Lord Charlemont. A predilection for Whig principles, joined to fondness for literature, always gained access to him, and both were conspicuously united in Lord Camden. Often have I heard Lord Charlemont speak with delight of the simplicity, purity, and variety of his conversation. The manners of the present Viceroy were popular, and his connexions in Ireland, were of great respectability. All these circumstances, as I have already stated, would, in other days, have had their weight; but the ungracious, sudden recal of the late Viceroy, the interruption of the Catholic question, and the supposed domination of the old part of the British Cabinet over their new auxiliaries,

* See further Appendix.

altogether indisposed the friends of Lord Fitzwilliam in Ireland, to the administration of his successor. Not so the House of Commons: "Its learning and good breeding such," it supported Lord Camden, as it had supported Lord Fitzwilliam; and had Lord Fitzwilliam again returned, even in the middle of the sessions, again would Lord Fitzwilliam have been supported. This too obliging disposition was the secret, or open triumph of the disaffected, and source of honest complaint to all who loved good government. It performed more than knight's service for the united Irishmen.

A motion for an enquiry into the state of the nation, was made by Mr. Grattan, and negatived. Lord Fitzwilliam's recall occupied the attention of both Houses of the British Parliament, and without effect. It was thought prudent however, here, not to object to the adoption of some of the measures of the former administration, and we find Lord Charlemont, with great candour, acknowledging this wise policy, as far as it went. I return to his correspondence.

"Dublin, April 6th, 1795.*

"I send you, under three covers, a small work

* To Dr. Haliday,

which I have lately received from its author, Monsieur D'Ivernois,* an old acquaintance of mine, of great merit, and indisputable veracity, and who, from his being a native of Geneva, and intimately connected with the commencements of the late Revolution there, must be allowed the fittest person to write on the interesting subject he has undertaken. The composition is good, but, above all, it appears to me to contain an excellent antidote against the poison of certain opinions, which have, I fear, been but too prevalent. A single experiment carries with it more force than twenty arguments.

"I have seen Robert,† and have given him but little comfort with regard to his friend's administration. I cannot but love him, yet, why so Be-Pitted? Our present chief I have not seen, though perhaps in that our conduct may not be perfectly right, but such, at least, are our feelings."

"Dublin, April 27th, 1795.

"I am glad you like D'Ivernois. The work is well translated, but is still, as is usually the case, far

* Sir Francis D'Ivernois,

† Robert Stewart, now Lord Viscount Castlereagh, eldest son to the Earl of Londonderry.

better written in the original French. The reign of terror, you say, is over. For the present, I believe it is, but how can we trust to the natural levity of a people, unconstrained by laws, and even by morals; not to speak of that great bond of society, religion, which is well nigh extirpated? The Catholic bill as been brought in, which is, indeed, a sweeper. It will be debated on this day se'nnight, and will, for the present, be negatived. They talk however, of a swinging minority, which will probably insure the future success of this measure, or, at least, of something like it. My health is still the same, not according Queen Anne's motto, '*Semper eadem*,' which was by a good Whig of her days, translated, 'always worse and worse.'

"Jackson has been found guilty, on the fullest evidence. A gentleman, who attended the trial assures me, that there was twenty times more proof of real guilt brought forward in this case, than in all the London prosecutions put together."

"Dublin, May 28th, 1795.*

"The Fitzwilliam controversy is, by no means,

* To the same.

finally closed, as the House of Commons is still to take its share, and most probably, more than its share, as the speakers there, are less tender than the more polished Lords. Much good has been done in this session, as all Lord Fitzwilliam's measures, those, I mean, which were begun in his time, have been put into execution, one only excepted, of which you know my opinion. The important treasury, that is to say, responsibility bill, has been perfectly carried. A good police bill has passed, and an election bill, which will, I hope, be of service, by simplifying the laws, and lessening the expense.

"The Lord Lieutenant, as might be expected, wished much for the support of Lord Charlemont. He well appreciated its value. If, however, that could not be obtained, or, at least to the extent that was looked for, Lord Camden expressed his desire, (which was laudable, and gentleman-like,) that no difference in political sentiments should prevent their personal intercourse. To this Lord Charlemont returned a suitable answer, but good-humouredly expressed his doubts, whether Sir Boyle Roche, (the master of the ceremonies,) would not forbid their meeting, as he had not been at the Castle.

At this time also, he was much indisposed. The Lord Lieutenant, with great civility, passed over all etiquette, and went to Charlemont-House. The visit was, of course, immediately returned, but it did not extend their connection. On looking back to this period, it is, indeed, a matter of much regret, that something was not done, some plan of conciliating politics adopted, which, though it could not immediately embrace every point, on which statesmen differed, might still give that aid, which administration wanted. Majorities it was not deficient in, but they only gave ministerial strength, and none to the country. Public opinion was still wanting, and that sort of public care, which could give vigour, not violence, to the councils of the Lord Lieutenant. Though the Catholic question could not then be conceded, *that* question, surely, though the most important, did not form the whole of Irish policy; nor was it then, or indeed at any time, to be admitted as a maxim, that because a particular question is not immediately acquiesced in, that every other question should be neglected, coldly supported, or perhaps violently opposed. As Lord Charlemont, at this time, did not relish the Catholic bill, he could with more consistency, have supported Lord Camden, than his coadju-

tors, who had protested against a junction with any ministry, that would not adopt that bill. If, however, *they* favoured that measure, Lord Charlemont equally favoured a parliamentary reform, and neither Catholic bill, nor reform, would be listened to. Hence, *his* standing aloof. But, above all, the British Cabinet, from its behaviour to Lord Fitzwilliam, could not be confided in by the opposition. Meantime the United Irishmen pressed forward; the old land-marks of the Constitution began to be lost sight of, and one violence to be opposed to another. This state of things is strongly marked in most part of Lord Charlemont's remaining correspondence. I lament it. The reader must be exhausted. But I can afford him no variety.

There are few traces, at this time, of much literary intercourse between Lord Charlemont and many of his friends. Mr. Melmoth's* letter to him is, at least, a proof of the constant attention which he paid to men of letters. He had

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* William Melmoth, Esq. so well known as the Translator of Cicero's Letters to several of his Friends, many of his works, &c.

renewed his connection with this amiable gentleman, when at Bath, and knew how to appreciate his literary attainments, though Dr. Johnson did not.*

"My Lord,

"I wish it were in my power to express, as strongly as I feel, those sentiments which your Lordship's letter had impressed upon me, but I can only request your acceptance of my warmest thanks, and appeal to your justice to be assured, that no man can set a higher value than I do, on the honour of your approbation, or is more ambitious to obtain it. I consider, as among the most desirable incidents of my life, that I have formerly, often enjoyed the pleasure and advantage of Lord Charlemont's conversation, and I never retired from his company without having occasion to think of that friend of Horace, whom he represents as "*ad unguem factus homo.*" My very advanced period of life will not suffer me to indulge a hope, that I shall ever enjoy that gratification again; nor, indeed, can I even allow myself to wish it, because I am

* See Boswell's life of Johnson.

persuaded, that nothing but indisposition can induce you to revisit these waters. You will never cease, however, to be present to my memory, so long as I shall retain any recollection of those persons, whom I most love and esteem; for I am, with the truest regard and affection,

" My dear Lord,

" Your Lordship's most obliged,

" and faithful humble servant,

" Wm. Melmoth.

" Bath, June 1st, 1795."

Lord Charlemont will be best seen in his letters; and those to his excellent medical friend, pourtray him much better than others which I have seen.

" Dublin, September 21st, 1795.

" Since our wonderful West India weather has given place to a temperature of air more congenial to our northern constitutions, my giddiness has greatly abated, and my head is tolerably steady, indeed wonderfully so, considering the general state of heads in this vertiginous age. At dinner I eat little or nothing, having almost ascertained the discovery of a secret, which, in this country, would be of the greatest utility,

namely, that eating is not necessary to life. But, alas! what a wretched answer is this to your sprightly, and most entertaining letter, replete as it is with good humour. I find, however, some comfort in being dull, since my own inability serves to assure me, that the man who can write as you do, must be in health. I am glad that you have seen your cousins,* and am happy that I am likely again to see them, as by your account they are to repass through Dublin. He is, indeed, a truly amiable man, and my lady, with whom I have not the honour of being acquainted, is much esteemed, and liked by all who know her. Mr. Dance has, as I am told, made but a bad head of my head. But, no matter, he has been fortunate in your's of which, thanks to the excellent Lady Londonderry, we have some chance of a copy."

"Dublin, October 24th, 1793.

"Short indeed must this note be, for I am ill able to write, and though from having swal-

* Lord and Lady Frederick Campbell, who were at this time in Ireland. Lord Frederick was, I believe, a relation of Mrs. Haliday, whose maiden name was Edmonstone, a most respectable family in Scotland.

lowed the bark of a Peruvian Forest, the malady is now a good deal mitigated, still I am so depressed, that neither my head, nor my eyes, will obey, and second my wish of a long conversation with you. Bodily disease, and bodily pain, must always effect the mind, and more especially a mind already sore, from various causes, but particularly from an incessant and painful contemplation of the melancholy and alarming state to which is now reduced that country, which has been ever so dear to my heart; and that too, not only from the wretched mismanagement of others, but in a great measure from her own fault. To you I need not say how ardently I have ever loved my country. In consequence of that love, I have courted her; I have even married her, and taken her for life; and she is now turned out a shrew, tormenting herself, and all her nearest connections. But no more of this, for indeed I can write no more."

"Dublin, January 4th, 1796.*

"Had it not been for the favourable account from Bath, of the consequent ball and masque-

* The same.

rade, your last letter, which appeared to me so long in coming, would have left me with spirits depressed indeed. But, thank fate, your anxiety is in some measure removed, and with it, I trust, your complaints will disappear. Upon the state of my health I will not dwell, as I have no pleasing circumstance to relate, yet I still struggle on through increasing years, bad weather, and horrid times, and, according to the precept inculcated by a very wise, though very vulgar proverb, 'Endeavour to make the best of a bad market.' Hamilton's* promotion is, indeed, a very pleasing incident, and does much honour to Lord Camden. When you see our amiable Viscountess,† congratulate her, in my name, on this good conduct of her brother."

In the course of this year, Ireland was the seat of every species of disturbance. The defenders raged with almost uncontrolled fury. The country of Armagh was every day more agitated by religious warfare. The Orange

*. Dr. Hugh Hamilton, promoted to the Bishoprick of Ossory. He had been a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin. A man of intrinsic worth, science, and genius.

† Now Countess of Londonderry, sister to Earl Camden.

Institution was formed this year. Its sole object was repeatedly declared to be the support of the Constitution, as established by King William. But, if its enemies speak the truth, it breathed nothing of that wise, and great monarch's tolerating spirit. With the History of Lord Charlemont it has nothing to do. Lord Camden met the Parliament, January, 1796. Opposition, if it now could be called so, was shrunk into a very narrow stream. Its numbers seldom consisted of more than sixteen. Often not half that number. If the great majority that prevailed, had displayed the calm, impartial spirit of constitutional senators, it would have had almost irresistible effect on the minds of the people, but this was not the case. "What was the temper observable in that House," said Sir Laurence Parsons, "on the Insurrection Bill?" Every thing said, however violent, against the disturbers of the peace, was received with plaudits; but if any thing was said to soften over-charged resentments, and to mix mercy with punishment, it was heard with discontent and murmurs. Liberty of speech was questioned. The most unworthy motives were assigned. They (the minority,) were called advocates for disturbers, and for what? Because, though willing to concur in powerful laws for their suppression, they would not, with a savage

ferocity, consider nothing but their vices, and refuse to offer some humane consideration, to sooth, if possible, the exacerbated feelings of the times! That these disturbers must be put down they all agreed. The difference was as to the mode."

To public distress, and feeling for his countrymen, Lord Charlemont was now doomed to experience the addition of much concern and anxiety, for the health of his friend Haliday, which, at this time, began, though slowly, to give way. Lord Charlemont was unremitting in his attention to him

"Dublin, May 16th, 1796.*

"Though I could not help being uneasy at your silence, yet, as it is both natural and wise to endeavour to palliate uneasiness, by hoping the best, I succeeded in persuading myself that you were prevented from writing, by your usual professional excursions; and I even added the comfort of thinking, that the constant exercise, which you were thus compelled to take, might very possibly be salutary to you. But your letter has awakened me from this pleasing dream; and I find, with true concern, that you have, unfortu-

* To Dr. Haliday.

nately been more occupied by illness than by business. There is, however, in the distressing account which you give of yourself, one circumstance, from which my heart extracts much consolation. Amusement, you say, has still the power to dissipate, if not to conquer, your ailment; if so, I trust it is no more than a nervous affection, and consequently within the reach of regimen. Do you drink tea? If you do, leave it entirely. Many years ago, I was alarmed, and tormented with the most violent palpitation, which returned every night, and kept me in torture for hours together. By the advice of Dr. Barry,† I left off tea, which I have never tasted since, and my cure was immediate; nor has the disorder ever returned. I have often seen our dear Viscountess,* though not near so often as I could have wished. To-morrow she is to set our for the North, so that I must, for the present, lose her; and have no other consolation for the loss, but that you will

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* Sir Edward Barry, a very eminent physician of Dublin, who afterwards retired to Bath. He is known to the literary world, as author of the Essay on the wines of the ancients.

* Londonderry.

be a gainer by it. In addition to every estimable and pleasing quality, she possesses one which must necessarily add a zest to them all;—she loves Lady Charlemont, and has, I flatter myself, some regard for me.——Our last news from Italy, bad as it is, gives us, at least, the consolation of hoping, that when things are at the worst they must mend. That our friend Burke should have chosen to play a principal part in this horrid drama, is, indeed, provoking. Alas! what is human nature, when prejudice can harden the best of hearts, and pervert the most brilliant talents. His attack upon the Duke of Bedford, is a perfect portrait of its author's mind. Great brilliancy, strong prejudices.†It is difficult to say how matters will end. A peace there must be, and yet I cannot think with patience on a *dishonourable one.*"

Amidst all his disquietudes, and multiplied occupations, Lord Charlemont always found an almost inexhaustible resource in the cultivation

† Some part of it, however, are exquisitely pathetic, especially where he speaks of Lord Keppel, and equal to any thing he ever wrote.

of letters. The language of Italy, he had ever a predilection for, and Mr. Cooper Walker,* who has so successfully presented the dramatic muse of that country to our acquaintance, was enabled, by his interesting historic researches, in whatever related to a subject so novel, and agreeable, to afford his Lordship much satisfaction and amusement. For that gentleman he entertained much esteem, and as that esteem was founded on his real worth and acquirements, his obliging manners gradually increased it to very cordial attachment. When Mr. Walker went to Italy, Lord Charlemont recommended him in a most particular manner to his old acquaintance, Sir William Hamilton, our envoy at Naples; and, indeed, on every occasion, he testified his regard for him. Several letters passed between them, relative to Italian literature. Two or three may be acceptable, for though not important, they present Lord Charlemont in various lights, and afford some diversity to the reader.

* Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. well known in the literary world, and most deservedly regarded by all who have the pleasure of his acquaintance.

" Dublin, July 3d, 1796.

"DEAR SIR,

" Accept my thanks for your goodness in gratifying my passion for Italian poetry, by the communication of whatever may in any degree concern it. The idea of your friend's analysis is, I doubt not, new, but I do not immediately perceive its utility, as the variety of *interrhyming* in Petrarch's Sonnets, is not in itself a matter of much importance, and as, without any scale, it is, in every instance, easily distinguishable at the first glance. In this judgment, however, I may be erroneous, from not having the full scope of what your friend has intended. The honour of inventing this species of poetry has never, that I know of, been ascribed to Petrarch, and you are certainly right in assigning it to Guitone d'Arezzo, unless we should agree, as I do not, with some criticks, who pretended that the formation of the sonnet was copied by the Italians from the provincial bards. Respecting the derivation of its name, your friend's conjecture may be ingenious, but is not, I believe, well-founded, as I may perhaps be able to prove to your satisfaction, when I shall have the pleasure of meeting you in my library. Your illness, and consequent absence from the academy, was a matter of deep regret to all those who wish well

to the institution, and we should have done wrong to ourselves, if we had not given you a seat in the committee of antiquities, which, principally for want of you, has been ill attended this year. I have, with great pleasure, carefully perused Mr. Hayley's Life of Milton, and think it by far his best performance, and perhaps one of the most capital pieces of biography in our language. Of Andreini's work I am possessed, and think, I must confess, less well of it than the ingenius vindicator of our great epic seems to do; but the *Adamo ed Eva* I never saw, and shall be much obliged to you for the perusal of it. All our ladies join in affectionate compliments to you, and Lady Charlemont in particular, desires to return her grateful acknowledgments for your kind attention to her entertainment.

"I am, my dear Walker,

"Your most faithful,

"And most humble servant,

"CHARLEMONT.

"P. S. I have not yet seen the *Essai sur la vie de M. Barthelemy*, and shall, when I can procure it, read it with peculiar pleasure, as I was once

well acquainted with its very ingenious author.*"

"Dublin, December 8th, 1796.

"My dear Walker,

"Perpetually occupied as I am with the incessant hurry of troublesome business, public and private, civil and military, it is scarcely possible that I should find a moment's leisure for a renewal of my correspondence with the muses, and with you; yet, though my weak eyes be at this instant, almost worn out with uninteresting scribbling, I will still further encroach upon them, briefly to return you my thanks for your last pleasing letter, which has afforded me much pleasure, by once more awakening in my mind my favourite passion, the love of literary pursuit. Marchmont we have procured, though we have not, as yet, found leisure to read it; and Lady Charlemont desires me to thank you, in her name, for the information you have given her respecting the poems, which, she doubts not, will contain a better portrait of the writer, than any that could be put into the

* The Duc de Nivernois, already mentioned. He wrote this Essay when in his eightieth year.

engraver's hands. Roscoe's work most certainly possesses great merit; but I must finish this hasty scrawl, by assuring you, that I am, dear Sir,

"Your most affectionate,

"And most obedient servant,

"CHARLEMONT.

"To the best of my recollection, I requested you in my last letter to add my name to Major Ousley's subscribers; of this I now beg leave to remind you."

Equally to oppose the foreign enemy, and domestic traitor, government had most prudently determined to raise Yeomanry corps throughout the kingdom. Infirm as Lord Charlemont was, he went down to his own county of Armagh, where he was of essential service, in promoting this great national object, from which such utility was afterwards derived. He slightly mentions his exertions in a letter to his friend.

"Armagh, September 26th, 1796.

"Here I am with the view of encouraging the raising of corps for the internal protection of the country in case of emergency; and how

far I may be able to promote the execution of that necessary measure, as yet I know not; but you are well enough acquainted with my sentiments, to render it unnecessary for me to say, that where the safety of the country is at stake, no motive will ever be able to prevent my endeavours to assist it."

A short time, or just before he left Dublin on this eminently useful work, he had, as was too often the case at this period, much cause of mortification from some persons at Belfast. Sedition was at this time rising fast into treason, and however many might differ from the ministers, as to the mode of opposing it, there could be no difference whatever, in the well-affected, as to the absolute necessity of setting up some barrier, to which they could resort, and some standard by which they could be distinguished. A declaration of political sentiments, and general attachments to the constitution, was proposed at Belfast; the signature to which was by many declined. Such reluctance at such a period, would, as Lord Charlemont justly thought, infect the very life blood of national enterprize against the enemies of Ireland. We cannot wonder therefore, if, upon this occasion,

he wrote the following indignant, and spirited letter:

"Dublin, September 12th, 1796.*

"What! Do the good people of your town consider it as a matter of very little moment, to be confounded in the mass of those whose principles they must detest? Is the present situation of this country, and more especially of your neighbourhood, such as to render an avowal of amity to the constitution, a matter of very little moment? As for the arguments, if such they may be called, made use of by those who wished to refuse their signature, they are really too futile to deserve an answer. That the spirit of discontent has struck its roots deep indeed, I am, alas! well aware. But is it merely a spirit of discontent? I also am discontented; yet that shall not prevent me from endeavouring to save my country from destruction. But the spirit that has gone abroad, is, I fear, of a far worse nature, and proceeds from the machinations of a set of wretches, who wish for confusion, because by that alone they can hope to thrive. They wish for a restoration of Chaos, not from the hope, though that would be suffi-

* To Dr. Haliday.

ciently foolish, that a better world might be created out of it, but, because they suppose that in the confusion of elements, the lightest must necessarily float at the top. The divine Milton, certainly no courtier, has well, and beautifully, pointed out the close connection which exists between Chaos and the author of all evil, where Satan addresses the powers and spirits of the nethermost abyss, in words not ill-adapted to a modern anarchist.

"—— Direct my course ;
" Directed no mean recompense it brings
" To your behoof, if I that region lost,
" All usurpation thence expelled, reduce
" To her original darkness, and your sway,
" Which is my present journey, and once more
" Erect the standard there of ancient night."

To whom the Anarch old answers, with the utmost kindness, and bids him "Go, and speed." "Havoc and spoil, and ruin are my gain." There was a time when my opinion might have had some little weight at Belfast, but those halcyon days are fled. My only consolation is, that *I* am no way changed, whatever they may be who formerly honoured me with their esteem.'

In somewhat more than three months after the writing of this letter, the French fleet was

off the coast of Ireland, with a large body of troops, under the command of General Hoche. It pleased Providence, in its mercy to these kingdoms, to disperse that armament, and render it totally ineffectual. To that providential interposition do we owe our safety. Nothing however could exceed the gallantry, loyalty, and good conduct of the South of Ireland on this occasion, and indeed every part from whence the troops issued to meet the enemy, or through which they passed. Lord Charlemont by no means relished the system, which ministers had begun to display in Ireland; but he considered the existence of the country at stake, and neither he, nor his freinds in the Lower House, opposed them at this time. The dispersion of the French fleet gave to him, as it may be supposed, new spirits. He flattered himself that this providential escape might awaken ministry to a sense of the perilous situation in which this country stood, it being now ascertained, that a French fleet might put to sea, notwithstanding our general vigilance and great naval superiority. The good conduct of the South would, he hoped, operate as a controul on the sedition of such in the North as had been led astray from their duty, and the intended invasion altogether tend to soften asperities, and open a door for domestic

tranquillity. In this he was mistaken; but his sentiments were those of a true lover of his country. His life was, at this time, almost uniform; some of his letters paint the state of his mind so exactly, and, I am willing to think, do him in general so much honour, that it is with pleasure I insert such as may, without any breach of delicacy, be given to the public. They form indeed, his genuine history.

"Dublin, December 10th, 1796.

"Is there, my dearest Doctor, a situation more truly anxious, than to fear that we are neglected by those we love and honour? Post after post passed away, and my humour grew worse and worse. Is he sick? No. Has his business occupied him more than usual? Whence then this unusual silence? Mine was assuredly the last letter; but what of that, says friendship? You should have written again and again,—and so I will, spite of my weak eyes and nerves,—spite of my perpetual, tiresome occupations, civil, military, public, and private. Such were the movements of my mind, and such my final resolution; when lo! my good genius appeared in the shape of two sonnets, removed my doubts, and crowned my wishes. How soothing to the heart is applause from a friend, even though a well-

founded modesty should assure us that partiality, not judgment, had penned the eulogy; that very partiality is perhaps more grateful to us, even than a consciousness of desert. Thank you, my dearest Haliday, and be assured, that your silence has been amply compensated. Yet still, as nervous folks are apt to seek what they do not wish to find, one little circumstance occurs, which in some degree damps my pleasure. Why are these sonnets dated 93 and 94? Has 1795 or 96, altered either you or me? Surely no. You cannot change; and though never worthy the praise your friendship bestows, I at this instant deserve it as well as I ever did, and more particularly the divine sentiments conveyed in that line; "whose frenzy, not his wrath, but pity moves." Angry! no. I weep over the madness of my beloved countrymen; and if my blood could cure their frenzy, they should be welcome to it. But I have written as much as I possibly can write, and must leave you. Adieu, my friend, and though your verses have now thoroughly appeased me, do not imagine that the silence of months shall hereafter be repaid by a sonnet; but be assured, that a frequent repetition of prose will give more satisfaction than the best of poetry.

" Dublin, February 1st, 1797.

" The French attempt, which is now, thank Heaven, at least for the present, entirely at an end, has, in my opinion, been productive of many salutary effects. It has shewn to the people, that there are dangers more to be dreaded than the effects of a bad administration. It has made the well-minded lay aside their vicious backwardness, and boldly speak out. It has confirmed the wavering, and in a great measure awed and silenced the clamour of faction ; but, above all, it has clearly proved, that the numbers of the disaffected have been far over-rated; that even they who talked wildly, would never be induced to act madly, and that the mass of the people is yet to be depended on. It has roused the martial ardour of the nation, and shewn our enemies, that where they were taught to hope support, they would find the most vigorous resistance. What you mean by the defection of Sir Laurence,* I do not know, unless refusing to obey the dictates of a private party; unless it shall be deemed defection to follow the dictates of our own unbiassed reason, rather than implicitly to assent to peevish and ill-timed

* Sir Laurence Parsons.

motions. Indeed, my dearest Doctor, true patriotism does not always consist in perpetual and indiscriminate opposition, which may sometimes take its rise in motives not much preferable to those which influence the conduct of the servile courtier. The man who, unwarped by interest, or ambition, acts at all times in the manner which, to his unbiassed judgment, appears most likely to serve, or to save his country, ever suiting his conduct to the exigency of the times, and never giving way, either to passion, or to desire of emolument, he is the good citizen, he is the true patriot.

"So Payne has now attacked Washington; no wonder."

It can be no matter of surprise, though it is always to be lamented, that the good are so often deceived. Lord Charlemont's hopes were ill-founded. A message from the Lord Lieutenant to the House of Commons, at this time, or not long after, announced the arrest of two committees in the town of Belfast, and the seizure of their papers, which contained matter of so much importance to the public welfare, that he had directed them to be laid before the House, and recommended to them to take the same into

their serious consideration. Lord Charlemont had, as appears from all his letters, conjured them to pursue a different line of conduct, but his advice was now laughed to scorn. They listened to the emissaries of the United Irishmen, and rejected the counsels of their old and tried friend. On the 10th of May, Mr. Pelham brought up the report of the secret committee. It justified, he said, those measures, which, with the approbation of the House, had been adopted by the Lord Lieutenant. That he believed many of the United Irishmen might have been induced to join that society under the pretext of reform, but he trusted that the publication of the report would shew them their danger, and the crimes they were falling into. It was ordered to be printed, and communicated to a committee of the Lords.

"Dublin, June 9th, 1797.*

"Deplorable indeed, is the account you give, and your experience of my sentiments will enable you readily to judge, how sensible I feel the misfortune of a town, which, with all its errors, must ever be dear to me; neither does

* To Dr. Haliday.

my having long foreseen, and fruitlessly warned your fellow citizens against what has happened, tend in any great degree to lessen my concern, since, perhaps, *they* are the most unhappy, and consequently the most to be pitied, who suffer from their own faults or follies; and far be from me that hardness of heart, which can view with indifference, or sometimes even with pleasure, the sufferings of a friend, merely because he brought them on himself. To avert these evils, you well know what pains I have taken. My advice has, indeed, been lavished on both parties, with equally ill success; but how could I expect that it would influence those with whom I was wholly unconnected, when it had produced little or no effect upon my friends? Would to heaven it had been otherwise; but spurred on by destiny, we seem on all hands to run a rapid course towards a frightful precipice. But it is criminal to despair of our country. I will then endeavour yet to hope. My conscience at least is clear, and with a clear conscience, utter despondency can scarcely exist. Every thing in my power has been done. I have recommended conciliation, I have recommended concession, and, though my advice, however strongly urged, has proved ineffectual, still I have disburthened my mind; neither is it

utterly impossible that, in the fluctuation of these unsteady times, my opinion may yet prevail."

The last effort, in favour of a Parliamentary reform, was made in the House of Commons, by Mr. Ponsonby.* The opposition insisted, that if even then adopted, it might be the means of drawing off and reconciling numbers. The ministers on the contrary alleged, that the report precluded all expectations of that sort, which, in the North, might possibly be true, and some gentlemen added, that the people should be *subdued*, before they were relieved. Idle and inconsiderate words! The mass of the people could not be called traitors; and though Parliamentary reform could tranquillize, as far as might be wished, such language was calculated to throw all conciliation to an immeasureable distance. That some reform, or some effort towards conciliation, was not made, is surely to be deplored. But a stranger to the history of these countries might, from the language now held in both Houses, be led to imagine, that a Parliamentary reform was never

* The late Lord Ponsonby.

before heard of, except from traitors; when, in truth, a defect in the representation had already engaged the attention of the most enlightened men in the country. From his academic chair at Oxford, Blackstone had pointed it out to the rising youth of the country; it had been glanced at by the resistless eloquence of Lord Chatham; and, after a long interval, given the richest colouring to the dawn of his son's political life. Mr. Fox had uniformly supported it; Sir George Savile, and some of the best and wisest men in Great Britain and Ireland. If a measure, good in itself, is to be for ever exiled from Parliament, and frowned out of society, because it may be perverted by mischievous and designing men, what is to become of us? The conduct of some potentates, and legislatures, was, at this time, not a little singular. The coalesced powers went forth, as they said, to combat for order, good government, and to extirpate usurpation. As a proof of their sincerity, some of them massacred the Poles, and divided Poland among themselves, utterly extinguishing it as a kingdom. The legislature of Ireland went forth very properly, in defence of the constitution, against the United Irishmen, and almost constantly talked,

and too often acted, as if there was no constitution whatever.

Parliament was dissolved in July, 1797; the venerable Earl had the pleasure of beholding his eldest son, Lord Caulfield, elected for the county of Armagh, with entire approbation and applause. Such marks of the esteem and affection of the people, for himself and his family, were always dear to him. The choice which he had made of his friends in the House of Commons, was confirmed by the general sentiment, and was every way satisfactory to him. To this, and some violent disturbance at Belfast, he alludes in the following letter:

" Dublin, November 4th, 1797.

" I heard of the late military outrage at Belfast, and need not to you, who know me so well, expatiate upon my feelings on that subject. But, alas! all the world is mad, and, unfortunately, strait waistcoats are not yet in fashion. With you, I lament the carnage with which our late victory was attended; yet still I must rejoice in the event, which will be productive of consequences, even thus not too dearly purchased. Indeed, among the sad effects of the present abominable transactions, none is more striking,

than that our feelings have been blunted by the perpetual repetition of horrors, and the man, who would formerly have wept over the loss of an individual, can now hear unmoved the death of thousands. In the late action, the slaughter was indeed terrible, yet what was it when compared to French butchery? A native of La Vendée has assured me, that, in that district alone, not fewer than five hundred thousand perished. He may most probably have exaggerated, but what ought to be our feelings, if we only believe one half of his narrative. What am I to expect from your next epistle? I cannot conceive, neither can I guess, whom you mean by *my* hero, in contradiction to Charles Fox; who, though I may have sometimes thought him injudicious, has ever been a hero of mine. Notwithstanding your Parliamentary apathy, of which I cannot perfectly approve, you will, I doubt not, hear with some satisfaction, that two excellent men, Frank Dobbs,* and Plunkett,† are likely to take

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* The late Francis Dobbs, Esq. an upright excellent man. He took an active and laudable part in the affairs of this kingdom, in 1782.

† The Right Honourable William Conyngham Plunkett.

their seats in the approaching Parliament. Of the former, to you who know him so well, I need say nothing, and the character of the latter is incomparable, both for abilities and for principle."

On the 15th January, 1798, the Lord Lieutenant met the New Parliament. Having acquainted both Houses of the failure of his Majesty's endeavours to restore peace, and justly alluded to Lord Duncan's naval victory, he added, that subordination and industry had, by the vigorous measures adopted, returned in the North. Lord Clare, (the Chancellor) supported the ministerial system in the Upper House, and observed, that the state of the North at that time, was a proof of the wisdom of the measures which had been adopted; they were strong, and had been *extorted* from the Lord Lieutenant, but they were successful. So imperfectly acquainted was Government with the real situation of that province! The House of Commons was,

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He has since particularly distinguished himself in the House of Commons of the United Parliament, during the very short time that he sat there. He was then Attorney General of Ireland, but resigned that situation soon after, in 1807.

compared to former days, almost silent. A conciliatory and just amendment to the address, was proposed by Mr. Smith,* and, like other motions of similar benevolence, was of course lost. Mr. Grattan was not a member of the New Parliament. A secession which Lord Charlemont most deeply deplored. The court enjoyed his absence; the country did not. There were many gentlemen of eminent talents, and unequivocal principles, returned to the New House of Commons. But the people looked for the old assertor of their liberties, and, like the image of Brutus, during the funeral possession of Junia, he was brought back to their minds, with an effulgence the more unrivalled as he was then withheld from their view.

Lord Charlemont had, soon after the meeting of Parliament, the satisfaction of beholding, what indeed was too often denied to him, the House of Lords the scene of important and dignified debate. It had been asserted, by some of the ministers in Ireland, and their parti-

* William Smith, Esq. now one of the Barons of the Exchequer in Ireland.

zans, that the Earl of Moira had always brought forth his charges against them, in the British House of Peers, and not in the Irish, of which his Lordship was equally a member, and where his charges could be more easily answered, possibly entirely refuted. There was no necessity for them to indulge in such a strain, as the Noble Earl was determined to persevere, and try whether every hope of conciliation was fled from the hereditary guardians of Ireland, as it seemed to have vanished every where else. Accordingly he attended in his place in the Irish House of Peers, on the 19th February, 1798. Never was a more thronged and anxious assembly seen. Above and below the bar every place was full. The House of Commons adjourned early on that day, to give an opportunity to their members to attend the debate, and all of them, who were in town, appeared there. Lord Moira's speech was manly, eloquent, dignified, and made a deep impression. The Chancellor replied at great length, and, it is generally agreed on, with much ability. Lord Glenworth* supported him. The Bishop of Downe,† who had never

* Now Earl of Limerick.

† Dr. William Dickson, late Bishop of, already mentioned in this work.

before spoken in the House, and would not have spoken then, had he not been called forth by the unprovoked asperity of the Chancellor, was heard with the utmost delight and satisfaction, not only because his reply was unexpected, but truly excellent. It refuted the acrimonious charges of Lord Clare, expressed the most liberal principles of legislation, and was delivered with a grace, and modesty, that interested every auditor. Lord Charlemont, as well as the Earl of Granard, and Lord Dunsany, who spoke ably, supported Lord Moira's motion, which was to address the Lord Lieutenant to pursue such conciliating measures, as might allay the apprehensions, and extinguish the discontents, so unhappily prevalent in Ireland." At a very late hour the House divided. The motion was negatived. Lord Moira, as well as several other peers, the Duke of Leinster, and many of the highest rank, joined Lord Charlemont in the protest. To this important debate his Lordship alludes in the following letter:

" Dublin, March 20th, 1798.*

" Health with me knows little melioration, and, in this city, public matters appear daily

* To Dr. Haliday.

to grow worse and worse. They, who censure Lord Moira's speech, are, in my opinion, possessed of neither taste nor judgment. Nothing could be better than his matter, unless his manner, which even surpassed the sanguine hopes of friendship; animated, though cool, and dignified without pomp. His first statement was excellent, but his reply was incomparable. The goodness of his heart, incapable of allowing him to do any thing, which might be attended by possible mischief, prompted his moderation, and the soundness of his understanding led him to believe, that he was far more likely to carry his point, by moderated firmness, than by any excess of violence. But that which most of all delighted, and surprised me, was his wonderful coolness, and self-possession, which were such as to persuade every one who beheld him, that he would have been just as cool, if commanding a line of troops, exposed to the hottest fire of the enemy. As to our dear Bishop,* you have exactly said what I thought of him. His answer to a most unjustifiable attack, was precisely what it ought to have been, and was, I am confident, unexpected by his opponent, as it

* Of Downe.

certainly was by his friends, and particularly by me, who, the morning before, had been urging him to speak, and had received for answer, that it was utterly impossible. But *facit indignatio versum.* You will have seen in the papers, that Frank* has broke the ice, an effort which gives me the more pleasure, as I feared that the sheepishness of the father might have been entailed upon the son. For his first essay he was not deficient in matter, nor in manner; and he shewed a degree of bashfulness, which indicates that sensibility, without which no man ever yet succeeded as a speaker. I am happy to inform you, that my two friends have done excellently. Dobbs has fully equalled my expectation, and will daily improve. Plunkett has exceeded them, and is already one of the best, and most useful debaters. All our loves to Mrs. Haliday, and congratulate her, in my name, on the excellent conduct of her countryman,† who has hitherto most certainly acted in his difficult situation, with the greatest propriety, and has

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* Francis, Lord Caulfield, now Earl of Charlemont.

† The late gallant, and truly-lamented, Sir Ralph Abercrombie.

the happiness of being cordially disliked and abused. Adieu, my dearest Haliday."

The debate in which Lord Caulfield spoke for the first time was on a motion of Sir L. Parsons, (March 5th) for an enquiry into the state of the nation, and to suggest such measures as were likely to conciliate the people. Lord Caulfield was listened to with peculiar attention on all sides. He spoke with sound sense. Lord Charlemont happened to be present, and could not conceal his emotions. The good-nature, and quick sensibility, so truly characteristic of the Irish, prevailed for the moment, and all unseemly violence subsided. But at such a time any softer emotions could be of no long duration, and party rage, and civil contest, soon resumed their arbitrary sway. Lord Castlereagh spoke at great length, and said, "that the United Irishmen were in open rebellion, and, therefore, only to be met by force." Mr. Plunkett replied, that he detested the United Irishmen, who had brought the country into that situation; but there were in Ireland, hundreds and thousands, who, though not in favour with the administration, as not being friends to their measures, were utterly hostile to the United Irishmen, who dreaded nothing so much as concession." This

was exactly true, but the House would not attend to the motion; 156 voted against it, and 19 with Sir Laurence Parsons.

"Dublin, May 3d, 1798.

"Thanks to the kind Mrs. Haliday, I have now before me two of your letters, from both of which I have received the highest satisfaction, as they are possessed of that true *signum salutis*, unforced, and unaffected pleasantry. You growl, indeed, and no wonder, for who in the present times, can do otherwise? But still your native good humour enlivens your discontent, and you contrive even to grumble comically. A temper naturally cheerful is, indeed, one of the greatest blessings bestowed on man; for while it in no degree impairs the sensibility of its possessors, it prompts his imagination rather to brighten, than to obscure the prospect, and enables him to collect from misfortune all its consolatory circumstances, as bees are said to extract honey even from poisonous herbs. Indeed, my dear Doctor, I have for some months been extremely ill, and, instead of getting better, as the season advances, I seem daily to grow worse; but so it must be, as I daily grow older. I *had* spirits, but they are evaporated; I *had* good humour, and in some degree I have it still. But how should it subsist under the pressure of public

and private calamity? Yet still, as there is no night so dark as to be totally void of light, both my private, and public prospects, are enlivened by some cheering rays. My son's success in his first parliamentary attempt, on which you so kindly dwell, most certainly affords me real pleasure; and I have the still higher satisfaction of perceiving, that, whatever his abilities may be, his principles are precisely as I would wish them, and such as will, at all times, prompt him to the disinterested service of his country. Ought I then to complain of my private lot? Surely no. And as to our public affairs, dark as they are, the gloom is in some degree brightened by lights from the north, where tranquillity seems to be re-established, and where good sense, and returning industry, appear to have at length prevailed over madness and tumult. With these consolatory circumstances I will close my letter, and with another, the thought and repetition of which must always give me pleasure, that I am, my dearest Haliday, your most faithful, and truly affectionate,

" CHARLEMONT.

" My love to our excellent Bishop,* and to

* Of Downe.

our dear Countess; tell Arthur Johnston,* that it is his duty to get well, as his country cannot afford to lose so excellent a man in this her sad decline. He never yet failed in duty towards her, and will not, I trust, in the present instance."

The *lights* from the north, which the good Earl mentions, were, as is now too well ascertained, completely fallacious, and not to be depended on. Alas! in twenty days after, the rebellion burst forth in all its horrors. Of that sanguinary rebellion, there can be but one sentiment, among all persons of unprejudiced understanding, and attachment to the Constitution. It could not be justified. That there was great folly in the public councils; a sad, perverse, and melancholy hostility to all conciliation; and that such temerity, and fury of disposition, accelerated the footsteps of insurrection, I can well suppose. That some persons far more violent than judicious, were not removed from the

* Arthur Johnston, Esq. of Redemon, in the county of Downe. A gentleman of considerable fortune, and great respectability.

public councils, or, at least, that some species of Parliamentary reform was not tried, I think, every moderate person must lament. Some leaders of the United Irishmen solemnly asserted, that had not all reform been denied, they would not have closed with France. Without contradicting this, it is evident however, that the transition from reform to revolution could not have been, to several of them at least, a step of extreme hesitation. To such persons, separation from England was the original object. It is clear, from the general tenor of their writings, so far back as 1792, that it was. But separation could not be obtained without French assistance, and that assistance would not be given to gain a reform, which was nothing to the French, but most readily given to obtain a separation from England, which was every thing to them.* The views, therefore, of the Parisian directory were speedily met, and those who originally, I make no doubt, looked to nothing else than a reform, and that indistinctly, soon adopted the bolder, and more expanded schemes

* See the evidence laid before the Irish Parliament by the committee, to whom the papers of the United Irishmen were referred.

of their coadjutors. This, I think, was their progress; but I can only write, of course, argumentatively. An enthusiam in some, originating from public principle; mere disappointment in others; the hopes of aggrandizement, of emerging from obscurity to distinction, to ill-got opulence, operating on too many, the delusive example of the French revolution, the source of so much misery; the profligacy of so large a portion of the House of Commons, the undistinguishing fury sometimes of Parliament itself, co-operating with, often out-soaring the wildest wing of a domineering court; such were, in my opinion, the leading causes of that rebellion. Redress of public grievances, the former boundary of the desires of many who engaged in it, had been long passed over, and the visionary fabric of an Irish republic, appeared to their heated imagination. But the columns of that fabric were not the work of any Catholic deception, nor had religious zeal, in my opinion, any share whatever in the original formation of the rebellion, though it afterwards, in some parts of Ireland, (and, thank God, but very few parts,) tinged that rebellion with colours, above all others, gloomy and terrific, and which, in every age, seem to have belonged to fanaticism and ignorance alone. A detail of the miseries which,

wherever that rebellion raged, desolated this kingdom, will not, I am sure, be expected here. It was extinguished; but if its extinction must always be the subject of national exultation and gratitude, the horrors which accompanied it, must also preserve their place in our recollection, and teach us to point out to those, who come after us, those sad errors in some, and that mass of rebellious guilt in others, which led to such an accumulation of evils. One mode of frustrating the efforts of conspiracy, and rebellion, which was resorted to in this kingdom, every person, I think, since the tempest of civil fury has now passed by, must deprecate, according to an Italian phrase, even "on the knees of their minds." It was that of extorting confession by whippings, by half hangings, by torture; a preventive system, as it was called, but which, in fact, had it brought forth thousands of arms more than it did, could not compensate for the too ample means which it furnished of nutriment to our worst passions, and the outrage it offered to the Constitution. "It seems astonishing," says Sir William Blackstone, "that the

* "Con le ginocchie della mente inchine."—PETRARCA.

usage of administering the torture, should be said to arise from a tenderness to the lives of men;" and yet this supposed tenderness for the lives and safeties of others, was the plea urged in its defence in Ireland. Such practices are the more to be guarded against, because it is natural to the human mind, to fly to any expedient, no matter how repugnant to our calmer feelings, that has the semblance of rescuing us from immediate evil; and the suggestions of cowardice or error, are afterwards sullenly maintained, as the dictations of no vulgar fortitude, and unbiassed wisdom. It is melancholy, it is humiliating, to adduce any authority for the promotion of humanity. But an exalted, generous prudence, in the hour of overwhelming civil contention, no one need blush to learn. Let those then, who, at the first approaches of confusion, or any new crime that threatens the state, wish to extinguish the ordinary tribunals of justice, or set up some arbitrary one of co-extensive authority, for ever remember the words of Lord Somers, speaking of the Star Chamber.

"It was set up in the 3d of Henry VII. in very soft words. To punish great riots, to restrain offenders too big for ordinary justice, or,

in the modern phrase, to preserve the public peace; but, in a *little time, it made this nation tremble.* England would never agree with those courts, that are mixed of state and justice; policy soon gets the better of justice."*

I am willing to indulge the hope, that all this will not be considered as too extensive a digression. Whoever looks back with a just sense of human infirmities, and human wrongs, to the lamentable period to which these Memoirs have now approached, will, I flatter myself, excuse me.

The rebellion had been now, if not put down, almost exhausted; when the British ministry seemed to be of opinion, that at such a juncture, the Lord Lieutenant should be a military man, and accordingly the Marquis Cornwallis was appointed. Lord Camden had, as he conceived, done his duty to the utmost of his power; and, as the Lord Chancellor stated, all the strong, or, indeed, violent measures, were extorted from him. He must, in

* Minutes of Lord Somers's speech in the House of Lords, on the bill for abolishing the Privy Council of Scotland.—Hardwicke State Papers.

my opinion, have gladly retired from such a scene of misery and terror. It is surely to be lamented, and the more so as it can scarcely be avoided, that, in times so fraught with dangers, and with horrors, as those which now prevailed in Ireland, no inconsiderable portion of the authority of the state should be consigned to low, illiberal, vindictive men, at a distance perhaps from the seat of government, who, intoxicated with their new power, and eager to shew their zeal, in hopes of some preferment, grossly abuse that authority. Yet, in some respects, are such men so necessary, that their abuses are connived at, often defended, by those in elevated stations. This position was never more exemplified than in Ireland at the present moment. Violent as some leaders were, their delegates, and subalterns, were far more so, as ignorance, and vulgar malice, feel no controul from the narrow circle in which *they* move, or sensibility even casually awakened. Insolence may cirtainly be found every where; but the habits of liberal intercourse are very different from those I have described, and society itself must be rendered one entire blot, before that persons accustomed to such intercourse, will attempt, and still less avow, any interruption or mockery of those laudable sympathies, which a cultured mind will

be ashamed not to acknowledge, however feeble or evanescent their impressions. It may be reasonably presumed, much as some persons in high authority are to be found fault with at present, that they were rendered even more obnoxious to the public, than they, perhaps, deserved to be, from the causes now assigned. I shall not attempt to speak of those of whom I know but little. One noble person, whose unpopularity was, however, entirely of his own creation, and in which no subordinate agent could have any share, I must beg leave briefly to mention. As a Statesman, Lord Clare had many faults; but the vices which so often degrade that character, did not belong to him. He was above all circumvention, all corruption whatever. Open and undisguised, his ambition, and his temper, held a uniform, mingled sway over him. Acrimonious, impatient, overbearing, so far from wishing to conciliate, (I speak of his public deportment,) he made use of language so revolting, so perversely unrestricted, that he often disobliged, nay made enemies even of those who acted in concert with him. That his Parliamentary opponents therefore was never spared by him, cannot be a matter of surprize. As to the lower classes; were we to judge of him, merely by his speeches, we might be led to conclude, that if the peasan-

try of Ireland could have been all collected on one funeral pile, he would have appeared as the first man, and with no averted eyes, to hold the torch to it himself. But in this respect how unjust was he to his own disposition; for, though on such topics he always spoke daggers, that disposition would have ever forbad him to make use of any. In his abhorrence of popular excesses, he talked as if he had forgotten all popular privileges; but his zeal, his predilections, and his temper, ran forward with such strange alacrity, that all memory of the higher duties, nay, sometimes the decorums of a Statesman, was, for the instant, outstripped in its course, by qualities so unbridled and so untoward. Early in life, I knew him well, and though our intercourse was discontinued, (I presume from politics, for he could little brook any opposition on that head,) ancient amity was never lost sight of. On a subject, therefore, where there must necessarily be many opinions adverse to mine, I would not speak, but from entire personal knowledge; and to that knowledge I can add, from authority, not feeble, as in the eyes of many mine perhaps may be, that Lord Clare, in many instances, displayed a feeling and compassionate heart. To return. The Marquis Cornwallis arrived in Dublin on the 20th of June. In nine days after

his arrival, a proclamation was issued, inviting all who were then assembled against his Majesty's peace, to surrender themselves. Fourteen days were allowed (from the date of the proclamation) for this purpose, and such persons as surrendered, were called on to enter their names, acknowledge their guilt, abjure their engagements, and take the oath of allegiance. On complying with such terms, the generals commanding in the different districts, were authorized to grant them protection, as long as they demeaned themselves as became good subjects. This proffered amnesty would alone have cheered Lord Charlemont's spirits; but as, nearly at the same time, a manifesto, or declaration of loyalty and adherence to the Constitution, expressed in the most solemn manner, was published at Belfast, his satisfaction was complete.

"Dublin, June 29th, 1798.*

"Though still scarcely able to write, an exertion must be made, as it is impossible for me to repress my desire of thanking you for the sincere pleasure I have felt at seeing your name subscribed to the incomparable declaration of the

* To Dr. Haliday.

inhabitants of Belfast. That your sentiments were exactly those which appear in that excellent production I had no doubt, but am happy that you have thus promulgated them to a public, which, from want of personal knowledge, might have mistaken you: Thus far I thank you on my *private* account; but where should I find words to testify my acknowledgments for the *public* service you have done, by affixing your truly respectable, and popular name to a declaration of such genuine loyalty? On this theme I would wish to dwell; but, alas! my head, my eyes, and even my hand, refuse their assistance.

"P. S. I take the composition to be your's."

Lord Cornwallis's proclamation was viewed in a very different light, by many, from that in which it was regarded by Lord Charlemont; and from this time may be dated that rooted dislike, and animosity, which pervaded the minds of some furious partizans against Lord Cornwallis. But the noble Marquis might have been well consoled. He must have had not only the approbation of his own mind, but that of every unprejudiced man, who, detesting the rebellion, and anxious for the preservation of

the connexion with our sister kingdom, did not chuse to put that connexion entirely to the hazard, by the continuation of a system, which might have rendered disaffection desperate, planted the seeds of irreconcilable hatred, between Irishman and Irishman, and rendered the very name of England disgusting to the present and succeeding generations. To the controul of that system, and the authority of some men in inferior civil departments, "most ignorant of what they most assumed," and, therefore, proportionably cruel, was added a seasonable check and rebuke of such of the military, (comparatively not many,) as, forgetting the courtesy which, to the lustre of the soldier's character, imparts so much amenity, counteracted the purposes for which they combated, and would have changed ardent loyalty into cold, unmoved allegiance, had not that loyalty known itself too well, and risen superior to their incivility and indiscretion.* To the

* "Ils vivent, ma Foi," says Madame de Sevignè, giving an account to her daughter of some of the troops which were sent to extinguish the commotions in Britanny; "Comme dans un pays de Conquête, non obstant nôtre bon marriage avec Charles VIII. et Louis XII." Rennes, at the time she wrote,

honour of the leading military characters here let it be said, that they always shewed lenity; and to the disgrace of another class in society, who very properly styled themselves not military, and very improperly, men of peace, let it also be said, that such lenity was by them always condemned.

General Humbert, with the very insignificant force under his command, arrived at Killala on the 22d of this month. A most accurate account of that arrival, and the transactions of the French in Killala, and its vicinity, have been given to the world by the respectable and learned bishop of that diocese. The route of the French, and the short battle which took place, previous to their surrender, every one is acquainted with. But, not to make use of any untimely levity of phrase, a common person must suppose that, under such circumstances as the French were then placed, battle was given by them merely

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bore a great resemblance, in some points, to Belfast at the present period; and there were not then wanting some headstrong politicians, who, for the folly of particular persons, would have laid waste the capital of Britanny, as, in our days, Belfast was very nearly destroyed from the suggestions of similar political zealots.

pour orner la scene, and to decorate their surrender as well as they could. For, with a force so superior as that which was brought against them, how was it in their power seriously to contend? *Sed non est his locus.*

The Parliament of Ireland, which, it is not to be forgotton, never discontinued their sittings, even when the rebellion was most furious, was at last prorogued on the 6th of October, by the Marquis Cornwallis. He observed, in his speech from the Throne, that the circumstances which had taken place since the commencement of the session, would render it for ever memorable. That by the unremitting vigilance of his predecessor, treason had been detected, and, through the sagacious diligence of Parliament, developed in all its parts. A wicked rebellion had, in a great measure, been subdued. He added, that the plan which had been adopted, for the remuneration of the losses of the suffering loyalists, was highly honourable to the feelings of Parliament, and, in every loyal breast, would excite emotions of love and gratitude to his country. Lord Cornwallis was, I make no doubt, sincere in all this praise of the Irish Parliament. But who could have thought that, in less than four months after-

wards, this assembly, which had so well maintained the connexion between the two countries, would be represented by Legislators and Statesmen, as perfectly incompetent to any such purpose, and all this eulogy, to write quaintly, so soon terminate in its elegy?

The following letter from Lord Charlemont to his friend, gives a melancholy picture of the country, and himself. It also shows, as I have stated, the intentions of ministers at this time, from the indirect sounding of the public mind, which now took place.

"Dublin, October 15th, 1798.

"Why, yes, my dear Doctor, I am, indeed, sadly indisposed; old age, which insensibly steals upon the happy and healthy, seems to have seized me by sudden invasion. But no wonder. Such must always be the case, when the corrosion of care co-operates with that gradual decay, which time must ever produce. And surely you, who are intimately acquainted with my heart, and have, with me, witnessed and deplored the sad series of events, which have for a long time crowded on each other in rapid succession, cannot be ignorant of the cause of that perpetual anxiety, which, like the

vulture of Prometheus, has preyed upon my vitals. Even now, when rebellion is frightened into its den, robbery and assassination, even in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, still keep the field, and reign in its stead. The murder of Hume,* the friend and favourite of his country, is a recent example of atrocity, which perhaps exceeds all that went before it. But, as if real events were not sufficient to disturb my mind, rumours also come in to their aid. The town is now filled with reports, that an Union will speedily be attempted. How far this may be true, I cannot presume to say, but the unhappy always fear the worst. Has this report reached you? If it has, tell me how it is received. Thank fate, I am enabled to conclude this letter more comfortably than when I began it, being this minute informed that an express is arrived from the post-master of Rutland,† with an account that in an action off the coast of Donegal, between our squadron, and that part of the Brest fleet which was meant for Ire-

* William Hume, Esq. M. P. for the county of Wicklow.

† A fishing town, built under the patronage of the late Right Honourable William Burton Conyngham, in the county of Donegal.

land, two French ships have been taken, and three so crippled, that they must necessarily fall into the hands of their pursuers. I am, however, perhaps, communicating intelligence with which, from your vicinity, you are already acquainted. But really the exploits of our navy are most illustrious, and that of Nelson, for your congratulations on which I sincerely thank you, a prodigy in our naval history. The French squadron is said to have consisted of one line-of-battle ship, and seven frigates, and in its defeat will, I trust, put an end to all fear of invasion. Your account of the Cow-Pock was received at the Academy with surprise."

The rumours of the Union, which the good Earl alludes to, were, at first, not at allattended to. Nay, for some time after this, so terrific was the very name of Union, and so likely, in the opinion of most persons to open afresh every source of discontent, that many who were connected with ministers, but far removed from their secrets, declared, in every company, that such rumours were the joint offspring of the old opposition and the United Irishmen. Some of the public prints, which were immediately under the influence of Government, in both kingdoms, re-echoed all such sentiments. But how soon did they change?

To suggest the idea of a Union was highly criminal in October; to oppose it in the subsequent April was almost High Treason!! Such is the metamorphosis, and such the agreeable vicissitudes of language, to which those gentlemen, who write only as the subalterns of ministers direct, are obliged to adapt themselves to.

The author of these Memoirs was about this time at a considerable distance from Dublin. Anxious to be informed on the subject of Union, he took leave, as he had sometimes done, to write to his Lordship. With his usual cordiality, but, at the same time, a mind deeply agitated, Lord Charlemont was so good as to write the following letter, which was the precursor of several more on the same subject. To unlock all that correspondence would be as unnecessary as improper. One letter alone may suffice to show what Lord Charlemont's feelings were, at this time, as to the Union.

"Dublin, November 8th, 1798.

"My dear Hardy,

"Though scarcely able to write from malady, both of body and mind, I must, and will, make an effort to thank you for your most acceptable

letter, and to assure you, that on the subject you mention, we are precisely of the same opinion, as I flatter myself we ever shall be, upon every important subject. The report to which you allude, and which is, I fear, but too well grounded, has put a finishing stroke to that misery of mind, with which every occurrence has, for some time past, contributed to afflict me. As soon as the rumour became prevalent, I thought it my duty to wait on the Lord Lieutenant. I prefaced my discourse by assuring him, that I expected no answer to what I meant to say, conscious as I was that, considering his situation, it would be impertinent even to desire it; but that, as a proposition of the highest importance was openly, and generally spoken of, and as there was a possibility, that the report might be founded on truth, I had deemed it an incumbent duty, shortly to lay before him my sentiments, not only for my own sake, but for his also, as I could not doubt but that, in a matter of this nature, he would wish to know the opinion of every individual. That I deprecated the measure for many, many reasons, but would now trouble him with one only; that it would, more than any other, contribute to the separation of two countries, the perpetual connexion of which was one of the warmest wishes of my heart. His

Excellency received my discourse with the utmost politeness; expressed his obligation, and his firm assurance, that every opinion of mine was founded on the best motives; but, in compliance with my desire, declined for the present, saying any more on the subject. From this you may readily perceive that this business is most certainly in agitation. Lord Clare, as I am told, makes no secret of its being a principal cause of his voyage to England, and two things only can, I fear, prevent its being brought forward; remonstrances from the English trading towns, and the firm opposition of individuals here. The former is, I am assured, probable, but may only tend to render the treaty worse for this country; and as to the latter, both you and I are too well acquainted with our fellow legislators, to put much trust in them. The state also of the people is, from many causes, highly unfavourable. They have, if I may use the expression, been stimulated into torpor, and the same reason which, in many counties, prevented the electors from taking the trouble of voting, would now, I doubt, even on this occasion, produce the most profound apathy. They, who are still rebels in their hearts, would like the measure as a mean of separation, and, in addition to what you have urged, it ought to be considered, that the whole-

some interference of resident landlords, which has alone preserved the country from utter ruin, would be exchanged for the interposition of merciless agents.

" But I can write no more. My eyes, which are beyond expression weak, totally fail me, and the subject makes me sick. I have much more to say, but will postpone it till we meet, which will, I trust, be soon. Lady Charlemont desires her compliments to you, and joins with me in the most sincere respects to Lord and Lady Granard.* Adieu. Believe me, with the utmost sincerity,

" Your most faithful, and truly affectionate,

" CHARLEMONT."

" Petitions against undue elections would be utterly impracticable."

The intentions of ministers being very soon after unequivocally declared, as to this great measure, the kingdom, as might have been expected, was extremely agitated. Resolutions

* The Author was then at Castle-Forbes, the seat of the Earl of Granard.

followed resolutions, pamphlet succeeded to pamphlet, chiefly written by the gentlemen of the bar, who, in various productions on the subjects, displayed great talents. Their literary labours had great effect on the public mind.

Parliament met on the 22d of January, 1799. The question of Union, which had been mentioned in general, not specific terms in the speech from the Throne, was well debated in the House of Lords. That truly independent nobleman, Lord Powerscourt, moved an amendment to that part of the address, which, as usual, was the echo of the speech, stating, "That the Union, as their Lordship's conceived, was not within the limits of their power, and that, if it were, it would be highly impolitic to adopt such a measure, as it would, in their opinion, tend more than any other cause, ultimately to a separation from Great Britain." This amendment was well conceived, and I state it the more particularly, as the topic of eventual separation was urged by as honourable and good men as ever sat in Parliament; men who did not breathe a thought that was hostile to the connexion of the two countries. That their augury may totally fail, must be equally their wish, with every rational, well-disposed

person in both kingdoms; but, as such were their apprehensions when the Union was debated, they would have forgot their duty to their country not to have declared them; and, as the biographer of Lord Charlemont, who was actuated by similar apprehensions, it is my duty to record them. Forty-six Lords were for entertaining the question of Union, nineteen against it.* In the House of Commons the contest was very different. The first debate continued from five in the afternoon till ten o'clock the next morning, when the Court carried the question by a majority of one. The debate was resumed

* To enter into the history of the Union, is, of course, totally foreign to the object of these Memoirs. But among its opponents, the late Earl Ludlow should never be forgotten. From London, and the honourable station which he had long held, that of Knight of the Shire for the county of Huntingdon, he was at this time retired to solitude, and Ardsalla, his ancient family residence in Ireland. But his change of fortune operated no change in his mind. He pursued the same honourable course which he had always maintained in public life, and resisted every temptation which was held out to him to support Union, and aggrandize himself. I feel real pleasure in thus mentioning him. He was a man of the most engaging manners, and fascinating gentleman-like deportment, that, I think, I ever met in the course of my life.

on the report of the address; the sitting was of equal length with that of the preceding evening. On the division, the Court was in a minority. The numbers were, 106 for the Union, 111 against it. This victory closed all further proceedings on the subject during the remainder of this session. The debate is in every one's hands. Those who come after us will decide on it with more impartiality than those who took a share in it.

Lord Charlemont felt great joy on this occasion; but though delighted, and almost intoxicated, as he said himself, with good spirits, at this unexpected triumph of the House of Commons, he by no means thought with many of the people, that such a victory was entirely decisive. He exerted himself as far as he could, to reap the fruits of it, but his health, which for several years, as appears from his letters, was very indifferent, began now most rapidly to decline. In the course of April, he writes thus to his old acquaintance.

" Dublin, April 19th, 1799.

" Greatly have I longed to hear from you, not only because a failure of your letters is to me a privation, if not of a necessary of life, at least

of one of those few luxuries which I am permitted to taste. Believe me, no man can feel more sensibly than I do, the validity of your excuses, being myself in a similar situation of almost absolute inability. But you will better conceive the extent of my depression, by its effects, than by any account I can give of it. What must it have been, when I was not able to attend the House, and partake of that oration, which, if Ireland can be saved, will save it. What you have seen is excellent, but you will see a great deal more, for, to-morrow I trust, a full and correct copy will be printed, and though the speech* lasted four hours, a single minute of it cannot be spared. Besides the excellence of the performance, nothing was ever better timed. Our great and laudable activity had given place to inaction, and men were allowed to sleep upon the question, a dangerous situation; since, when gentlemen are allowed to sleep, they are too apt to have *golden* dreams. Respecting

* This was a speech of the Right Honourable John Foster, in a committee of the whole House. He took that opportunity of delivering his sentiments on the question of Union, which came incidentally before the committee. At that time he was speaker. The speech was soon after published.

Parliament you must not be unreasonable; give them due praise for their merits, whatever demerits they may have."

This letter closed the correspondence between the amiable Earl and his ingenious, agreeable, and respectable friend. The speech which he alludes to, deserves, indeed every eulogium. The last sentence in Lord Charlemont's letter deserves particular attention. It was precisely that unreasonableness, which his Lordship mentions, that disposition to be unsatisfied, which at all times even in its best days, Parliament had to contend with in various parts of Ireland. If it acted with patriotism, and that it often did no one can be so absurd as to deny, there was certainly public gratitude and applause; but with that gratitude too often came forth a querulous and wayward spirit, as full of fantasies as of ignorance, which gradually rendered every thing that was done unpromising, or of dubious import in the eyes of superficial observers, who every where constitute a majority. It was not sedition that Parliament had, in this instance, to encounter. It was not that versatility, and change of opinion, which all statesmen in all ages have justly complained of. No. Change of opinion could not

take place, where there never was approbation, and where it was determined there never should. But there was not one honest guardian of the public weal in Ireland, who did not feel the effects of this cold and chilling humour, which was so often most diffused where the merit of Parliament was most exalted, and did more for the venal courtier and determined rebel, than they could have ever done for themselves. It was, in truth, not unlike the mist, as described by Homer, spreading over the tops of the mountains; to the shepherd not friendly, but to the thief, far better than night itself.

Lord Charlemont was now the almost continued victim of indisposition, daily sinking under his disorder, but still anxiously employed for the welfare of that country which he so truly loved. His friends saw him constantly, but saw him, on every visit, with augmented, and sometimes ill-concealed sorrow. His fondness for literature still remained the same. The two following letters to Mr. Walker, the first of which precedes the present period by a month or two, and the last written when he was almost borne down by illness, indicate this sufficiently.

" Dublin, 2d February, 1799.

" DEAR SIR,

" Please to accept my most sincere acknowledgments for the very acceptable present with which you have favoured me,* as well as for your very kind letter, the terms of which are certainly not the less pleasing to me, for their having been dictated, like those of Baretti's dedication, rather by partial friendship, than by strict judgment. Spite of the avocations of the times, in which both duty and affectionate zeal compelled me to take a share, I shall peruse your work with fond attention, and shall more than ever regret the weakness of my eyes, which could alone prevent me from greedily devouring it, as the production of one for whom I have the highest regard, and to whom I can with truth subscribe myself,

" Dear Sir, your faithful,

" And truly-affectionate,

" humble Servant,

" CHARLEMONT."

* On receiving a copy of Mr. Walker's Memoir on Italian Tragedy.

"My dear Sir,

"When your last very kind letter remained so long unanswered, I trust that your justice ascribed the failure to absolute inability; such indeed, was the case. I have been for some time past extremely ill, and even now am scarcely able to write. I am in possession of the valuable *Furioso* to which you allude, with an inscription in very old writing, on the first page, testifying that the book had been presented by the author himself, to the *Sig^ra. Veronica Gambera. So spelt.* It is printed on vellum, and contains not twenty, but forty-six cantos, being the first edition of the work, as completed and arranged by Ariosto. I do not believe that I am possessed of the dramas you mention, but, at all events, am not now able to *climb* in search of them. Quadrio I have, and shall be made happy by your consulting him in my library.

"Believe me, my dear Walker,

"Ever your's, most sincerely,

"And most affectionately,

"CHARLEMONT.

"Dublin, 18th April, 1799."

But Lord Charlemont's valuable life now drew rapidly to a close. He had attended con-

stantly in the House of Lords, during the discussion of the Union, and the temporary defeat of that measure had given him some transient spirits. But his health declined every hour. His appetite had almost ceased, his limbs swelled, and it was evident to his family, and his friends, that he could not long survive. He was visited in this his last illness, by his numerous acquaintance, till his strength, more and more exhausted, rendered him incapable of seeing but very few. One of the persons whom, I believe, he last saw, was Baron Metge ;* a gentleman whom through life he highly valued, and who was most cordially attached to him. At last, for some days previous to his dissolution, he sunk into a species of stupor, *Consanguineus lethi sopor*, to make use of the words of one of the respectable physicians who attended him.† He at length expired, at Charlemont House, Dublin, on the 4th of August, 1799, and in the seventieth year of his age. It was at first intended that his funeral

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* Peter Metge, Esq. late one of the Barons of the Exchequer in Ireland.

† Dr. Plunkett. Dr. William Harvey was the family physician.

should be public; but, after some consultation, his remains were conveyed to Armagh, and interred in the family vault, in that ancient Cathedral. Though it was agreed on that the funeral should be strictly private, it was most numerously attended. The burial service was read by the Lord Primate, Archbishop of Armagh.*

Among his papers is the following:

MY OWN EPITAPH.
Here lies the body of
JAMES, EARL OF CHARLEMONT.
A sincere, zealous, and active friend
To his Country.
Let his posterity imitate him in that alone,
And forget
His manifold errors.

Thus have I endeavoured to present to the reader, the public, and much of the private, history of Lord Charlemont. To write the life of such a man, may be, perhaps, impartially considered, as a matter of some difficulty. Though engaged much, and acting the most honourable part in political life, he could not be strictly called a statesman; though a member of an an-

* Right Reverend Dr. William Newcome,

cient, deliberative assembly, he was not an orator; though possessed of the purest taste, and distinguished by many literary performances, which do honour to his memory, he cannot, without a violation of historical truth, be entitled to the name of an eminent author; and though the distinguished leader of many gallant bands, he will find no place among the conquerors, or desolators of mankind. *Nil horum.* But he was better than all this. He was, in every sense of the word, an excellent man. Of morals unstained; of mind, of manners, the most elegant. He was not only such a fine gentleman as Addison has sketched with a happy pencil,* but passed far beyond the limits of that character. He was, with some allowance for those slight errors which adhere to the best dispositions, a patriot of the justest views, who kept his loyalty and his zeal in the most perfect unison. His sole object seemed to have been the good, and melioration of his country. To a certain degree he obtained that object. He obtained a triumph over the ancient prejudices, and ancient policy which held the legislature of this country in thraldom. He indeed lived long enough to see that triumph idly, and ungratefully

* See the second volume of the Guardian.

depreciated. But his laurels are not the less glorious. They were certainly all pacific; and if many a venal statesman, or those who were interested in confusion, secretly lamented that they were so, I am well aware, that many a reader, also, will consider the pages which record such laurels, as cold, vapid, and uninteresting.

> Sed magis pugnas, et exactos tyrannos,
> Densum humeris, bibit aure vulgus.

But if ever the rage for war can be satiated, the period on which we have fallen would, I think, abundantly satisfy the most wretched avidity in that respect; and the change of dethroned, or exiled monarchs, has been so frequent, that these humble Memoirs may have a chance of being read, even from the difference of scene which they present to those who cast their wearied eyes over the desolated continent of Europe. The scene, however, so presented, is not only not exempt from the general agency of human misery, for what place is so; but it partakes at one period, of those horrors which have given such a pre-eminence in calamity to the present epocha in society. That it did not abound in more, and that at an early period in Lord Charlemont's political life, it was not hurried into a contest of a very different nature from that of 1798, may surely,

without any strained eulogy, be attributed to him; and, it cannot be too often repeated, the moderation and good sense of those who acted with him. For such wise and healing conduct, slightly discoloured as it might be with occasional imperfections, his memory is entitled to just and lasting praise.—With regard to the Catholic question, on which, and, as I think, most unhappily, Parliament is yet so divided, Lord Charlemont, in 1793, voted against the concession of the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics, and it is evident, from his letters in 1795, that he had not then relinquished his former sentiments.* Some time after, (I

* I beg leave to insert part of a letter from the Right Hon. William Conyngham Plunkett, which I received since this work went to the press, and have that gentleman's permission to insert here.

"I observe, that in page 419 of your Work, you mention that Lord Charlemont never altogether abandoned the opinion, which he had originally entertained, in opposition to the claims of the Roman Catholics. So much reverence is attached to every opinion which he entertained on the affairs of Ireland, that I feel it a duty to communicate to you the following circumstance, of which you may make whatever use you think proper.

"In the year 1798, or 1799, I had a conversation with his

know not the precise period) they underwent some change, but, in truth, he never altogether abandoned them. But that he truly loved *all* his countrymen,* that he always felt for the degraded situation of the Catholics, and early in life wished to change it, cannot be controverted. He rose above ancient prejudice, and the history of former days, when he cultivated such feelings, for the murder of his ancestor, Lord Charlemont, in 1641,† was often present

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Lordship, of which the topics of the Catholic Claims, and of Parliamentary Reform, formed a part. He said, that to these two questions he had made two sacrifices: to the latter, a borough—and to the former, (which, he said, he considered as a more meritorious effort) a prejudice. His Lordship then went on to state some of the grounds on which, originally, he had been adverse to the immediate admission of the Roman Catholics to the privileges of the constitution, and also some of the reasonings, which had latterly induced a change of his sentiments on the subject. Of these I have not any such precise recollection, as would warrant me in an attempt to detail them; but the preliminary observation was so marked, and epigrammatic, that I can pledge myself for its authenticity."

* "How is all your family?—I mean Ireland;" says Haliday in a letter to his Lordship.

† Castle Caulfield, the seat of the family, in the county of Armagh, was burnt in that year.

to his mind, but it neither obscured his intellect, nor extinguished his benevolence. To punish the living for the misdeeds of those who had been a century and a half in their graves, and such misdeeds basely amplified, was, he thought, a policy peculiarly humiliating to the understandings of those who practised it. Such vulgarity of sentiment he could not indulge in. But the liberty and prosperity of his country were his objects; and as he saw that they could not be obtained but partially, without a general union of Irishmen, his ruling passion, even in death, not withered, but regulated by long experience, and much reflection, led him to some dereliction of early opinions, and the experiment of a novel policy.

Lord Charlemont co-operated often, indeed generally, with those who acted as a party, and professed that they did so; a party founded on common principles, and those principles congenial to the common interest. A party pursuing such a system, is necessary in our form of government, and is to be applauded. But let us not panegyrize or expect too much. The more ignoble motives of human action often intermingle themselves with the pursuits of every party, and how often is a debate brought

forward, or a question opposed, for the sole purpose of gratifying the spleen or humour of the day? *Plus stomacho, quam consilio dedit*, may be regarded as the device of too many oppositions, and it is no less ungenerous than unwise, for it not only injures them in the eyes of the public, but eventually proves the source of embarrassing, and most awkward personal molestation, when they come into office, as it furnishes their adversaries with such copious and inconvenient recollections. In truth, to hear some leaders of opposition talk, one would imagine, that they never meant to come into power; and when they are in power, so dissimilar is their language, that they never were once out of it. To all such leaders, Lord Charlemont never belonged. Or, could we even suppose that, unintentionally, or above all suspicion of their motives, he was, for a moment, united with such, it might be truly said of him, as Antony said of Brutus,

> " He only in a general, honest thought,
> " And common good to all, made one of them."

Whatever his accidental, or necessary co-operation, his party was only that of his country, and if, in his Parliamentary con-

duct, there was any particular defect, it arose merely from that jealousy, which, certainly, not only the constitution abstractedly, but the situation of this country, too often demanded; a jealousy, however, which, in some few instances, might be said to have extended too far, and without that necessary allowance for human dealings, which our lamentable nature so frequently requires. Nothing could be more just, or more worthy the attention of Ireland, than the observation of Mr. Fox, in his letter to Lord Charlemont.

"That country can never prosper, where what should be the ambition of men of honour, is considered as a disgrace."

It was sadly exemplified in Ireland. Had those who enjoyed, and deserved public confidence, taken office in defiance of popular prejudice, their disinterestedness might have gradually worn out that prejudice, and by adding public opinion to the weight of their own character, out-balanced mere ministerial authority on many an important topic. That he did not speak in Parliament, or in public, Lord Charlemont always lamented. It is surely not necessary, though some writers have thought it so,

to make an apology for that which can require none, and introduce a crowd of splendid names, Addison, Prior, Soame Jenyns, and others, to keep, according to a trite phrase, any senator in countenance, who never delivered his sentiments in Parliament. The talent of public speaking is a peculiar gift, and whatever Lord Chesterfield may say on the subject, though practice will certainly improve such a faculty, nature must bestow it, as much as another endowment of the mind. In private conversation, Lord Charlemont was above most men. No one could speak with more ease, purity, and perspicuity. But they who imagine that those persons *who* so excel, would equally excel in public, adopt a very erroneous opinion. Colloquial powers are, in truth, so totally distinct, that he who is highly gifted with such, and has long exercised them apart from politics, will find it difficult, perhaps impossible, at a certain period of life, to catch the tone and style of public speaking. Even at the academy, where he might have been said to be at home, Lord Charlemont could not deliver any thing that had the semblance of a speech, or an harangue, without being totally disconcerted. But he was then far from young. Had he, in earlier life, persevered in his efforts as a public speaker,

I make no doubt that he would have been an excellent one. That he was alive to every nobler feeling in public life, has been amply shewn. His sensibility, and delicacy of taste, led him to the study of the fine arts, and polite literature in all its branches. Hence his communication with every erudite, or lettered man, at home or abroad. The Marquis Maffei, in Italy, Prince Czartoryski, in Poland, St. Palaye, Nivernois, Montesquieu, and the Comte de Caylus, in France. He had a great respect for some of the Scotch literati; but I am not enabled to particularize them. The men of science and genius, in England, to whom he was known, have been already mentioned. Mr. Malone, whom the lovers of Shakespeare must ever respect, he always loved and esteemed, and preserved an uninterrupted correspondence with. Of his countrymen who resided altogether in Ireland, Dr. Leland, that excellent scholar,* mentions his Lordship, as his first and early patron, and their intercourse

* He translated the orations of Demosthenes, and wrote the life of Philip of Macedon. At a subsequent period, he wrote the history of Ireland. Dr. Johnson had a great esteem for him. He was senior Fellow of Trinity College, in Dublin.

was liberal and frequent; many others might be adduced, or have been so, in the course of this work. I believe that few instances occur, of any one so engaged in public life, as for more than forty years he was, who paid such unremitting attention to letters.

In painting, sculpture, and above all, in architecture, his taste and knowledge were discriminating and profound. Yet his modesty and uniform desire to assist ingenious merit, were no ways inferior. The late Dr. Quin,* who was himself an excellent judge of the fine arts, used to say, that he had just reason to believe that Lord Charlemont himself planned the temple at Marino, and resigned the credit of it to Sir William Chambers. There was scarcely a contemporary artist of any merit, whom he did not know; and many of them, in the earlier part of their lives, he patronized. With Athenian Stuart, as he was called, he lived in entire intimacy, as well as with Hogarth. Various are the letters from persons abroad, the Abbe Grant, so well known formerly to the

* Dr. Henry Quin, a most eminent Physician in Dublin.

English at Rome, and others, recommending young artists to his attention. He was, in truth, an unostentatious Macenas, and his fortune, it cannot be denied, was considerably impaired by his attachment to, and encouragement of, the fine arts. Men of scientific pursuits were also cherished by him; Sir Joseph Banks* particularly, who was highly valued by, and very dear to him.

A word or two, and no more, remain to be said relative to the history of Italian poetry.† Of a work so voluminous, and so interwoven with notes and erudite criticism, it would not be easy to give such extracts as could satisfy the reader, and certainly would swell this work beyond all just limits. Of some of the Italian poets Lord Charlemont has given an historical account as accurate as pleasing. But I must confine myself here to some few sonnets, stating, at the same time, that he chiefly regarded a translation as nearly literal as could be attempted. He seems to have been of my opinion, that our blank verse was as well adapted to Lyric, as to

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* See the Appendix.

† See page 306, vol. I.

Epic, or any other kind of poetry. In his translation of several of the odes of Horace, (accompanied indeed with some excellent notes,) the authority of Milton, and his own dislike of rhyme, induced him to attempt a species of measure, which, however faithful to the original, or harmonious some particular lines may be, is, in truth, neither prose nor poetry. In this respect, I think, the delicacy of his taste rather misled him. But I shall beg leave to present the reader with two or three Sonnets, of his translations, from some of the Italian poets. His accuracy and sensibility are, throughout, conspicuous. In these he has adopted rhyme.

SONNET FROM TESTI.*

Al suon di miei sospiri, e di miei pianti
Tu pur, sonno gentil, desto a pietade.
Di quella, &c.

At sound of my complainings, of my sighs,
To pity roused, even thou, O gentle sleep,
The form of her, who knows not how to weep,
Pitying presentest to my mental eyes.

---

* Testi was born at Ferrara, 1593.

In dreams those matchless charms my sense enjoys,
That waking thought can never hope to reap;
Thus on my heart, thy flitting shadows heap,
Those joys which impious beauty still denies.
But whither fly'st thou; Ah! Thy flight restrain!
Alas! this cruel flutt'ring without cease,
From her was learn'd, whose image thou didst feign;
Yet not from thy deceit my woes increase;
Foolish, and mad am I, who thus sustain,
On images and shadows all my peace.

SONNET FROM LUDOVICO DOLCE.*

Mentre raccoglie hor' uno, hor' altro fiore,
Vicino à un rio di chiare, e lucid' onde,
Lidia, &c.

'Twas on a Streamlet's flow'r-enamell'd side
Whilst Lydia cull'd the fragrance of the field,
Lydia, to whom the prize our beauties yield,
Lydia, of every shepherd's heart the pride!
Nestling 'twixt flower and flower by chance she spied,
Like little snake, the God of love conceal'd;
In haste her braided treasure she reveal'd,
And with a tress the lurking mischief tied.
The little God, rous'd from his balmy rest,
With frequent flutterings struggled to get free,
And shook his pinions, fledg'd with downy gold,
Till, glancing on that face, by Venus blest,
"Tie me," he cry'd; "bind fast this urchin bold!
For ever here my chosen seat shall be."

---

* Dolce was born at Venice, 1508, and died there, 1568.

SONNET FROM GUARINI.

Qual pellegrin, cui duro esilio affrena.

As the poor exile, whom the tyrant's ire
Has forced to quit his dear, his native nest,
By arms surrounded, and with fear oppress'd,
In pathless deserts shuns the danger dire.
His fear at length o'ercome by fond desire,
And hope, again he seeks the region blest
Which gave him birth; but here the fell arrest
O'ertakes him, doomed in tortures to expire.
Thus I, though fortune, and a tyrant maid
Have driven me far away from that dear face,
Whose beauty fed my heart, ambrosial fare!
Return to her, still fondly hoping grace,
To her, who mark'd me wretched! Well aware
My fond desire must be by death repaid.

FROM PETRARCH,

SONNET 182.

This Sonnet was probably written during one of those maladies to which, as we may collect from the frequent complaints of her lover, the delicate constitution of Laura was but too liable.

Fra quantunque leggiadre donne, e belle,
Giunge costei, ch'al mondo non ha pare, &c. &c.

Whene'er amidst the damsels, blooming bright,
She shews herself, whose like was never made;
At her approach all other beauties fade,
As at morn's orient glow the gems of night.

Love seems to whisper : while to mortal sight,
Her graces shall on earth be yet display'd,
Life shall be blest ; Till soon with her decay'd,
The virtues, and my reign shall sink outright.
Of moon, and sun, should nature rob the sky,
The air of winds, the earth of herbs and leaves,
Mankind of speech, and intellectual eye,
The ocean's bed of fish, and dancing waves,
Ev'n so shall all things dark and lonely lye,
When of her beauty death the world bereaves.

It may be proper to mention, that Lord Charlemont speaks in the warmest terms of Mr. Boyd's translation of Dante, as "one of the best poetical translations in our language, and which is only prevented from being a *real* translation, by the constant uniformity of its merit." It first induced him to give a version of Dante, of which, as well as of all his translations, he speaks with the most engaging modesty and diffidence.—Of Mr. Roscoe, whom he highly recommends, he adds, "his translations make me blush for mine. Yet I must say, that, excellent as they are, they share in the glorious fault of being *too poetical*, and the latitude he has allowed himself, rendered this part of his labours, to me at least, not entirely satisfactory, by lessening that resemblance to his originals, which I must persevere in thinking the first object of translation."

As to his domestic character, without the predominating excellence of which, all the ornaments which literature, or manners can bestow, are of diminished lustre, he was an indulgent father, a tender husband, a generous and kind master, an ardent, sincere friend. To intrude on the private concerns of any family would be indelicate; but, were it so permitted, his disinterestedness, as a relation, might be shewn in the most favourable point of view. Sometimes, not frequently, he was irritable, but easily appeased. That irritability shewed itself more in the House of Commons, than any other place whatever. Among the country gentlemen he had numerous friends, and very general influence. To the freedom of public opinion, he had every respect, but, if some of those gentlemen, as was now and then the case, took a part in debate, or voted in a manner which he had reason to imagine was directed by oblique motives, they were certain, if they met him in the lobby, of encountering a tolerable sharp reprimand. The importance of the House of Commons was, he used to say, in a great measure, sustained by the county members, and when such men relinquished their independence, they relinquished every thing. But his anger was not often displayed; and so transient, that

it could not be said to derogate from that suavity of manners which so eminently characterized him. From some prejudices, or dislikes, he was not free. Whence it arose, I know not, but he had, through life, almost a repugnance to the French. Of his friend, the Duc de Nivernois, he would, after speaking highly of him, generally add, "But he is not a Frenchman, he is an Italian." This, however, was said in mere unbended conversation, and far remote from any illiberality, which could warp his judgment in essential matters, either as to literature or morals. He highly esteemed several of the French nobility, and never mentioned the old, generous Maréchal de Biron,*

* Louis de Gontaut, Maréchal Duc de Biron, and for more than forty years Colonel of the French guards, to whom he was particularly dear, from the generosity and heroism of his manners. The memory of the Marshal should be ever respected by the English, for he always received such as were properly presented to him, with a courteous and magnificent hospitality. His kindness and munificence to Lord Rodney, must always be remembered. He and his contemporary, the Maréchal de Brissac, seemed, as military men, to be of the school of Francis the First. They would have gathered round him at the battle of Pavia, and never deserted him. The Marshal de Biron died at Paris, October, 1788, in the 89th year of his age.

without a degree of enthusiasm. In the lighter species of poetry, and memoir writing, he considered the French as excelling all others. But their graver poets were not equally the objects of his admiration. Altogether, their literary character, and the romantic courtesy, and high honour, which in the superior classes were so often blended with that character, peculiarly engaged, and even fascinated his attention. But the general mass of Frenchmen he was not attached to.—His life, when in Dublin, and not engaged by the Volunteers, was extremely uniform. He was on horseback every morning, and afterwards employed in various business till about one o'clock; at that time, or soon after, he went to his library, and remained there till almost dinner time. His friends had then constant access to him; and, considering the frequent interruption of visitors, it is a matter of some surprize, that he was enabled to write so much as he did. But it is a proof that not one moment of his time was unemployed. When Parliament was sitting, he regularly attended his duty there; and as the Lords, if not detained by particularly important business, rose rather early, he was to be met every day in the House of Commons, where, from long usage, he was almost regarded as a member. Those

who have sat next to him, during a debate, cannot forget the vivacity and justness of his remarks, on the different speakers. As president of the academy, he equally attended their meetings, and when his health was interrupted, the academy, from their respect to him, adjourned their sittings to Charlemont House. At home, and in the bosom of his family, he enjoyed domestic society, with tranquil, unruffled satisfaction and pleasure. From continued study during part of his life, his eyes had suffered irreparable injury, and, on that account, some one of his family constantly read to him every evening which was not given to mixed company.

As to his person, Lord Charlemont was of the middle size, or rather above it; but he stooped considerably, especially towards the latter part of his life; the effect, I believe, of ill health. When he appeared with his blue ribband, and in full dress at the levee, his air and deportment were exactly those of a Foreign Ambassador of the highest rank. His eyebrows were large and black. His features, when a young man, to judge of him from one or two portraits, were of a softened and delicate cast; but pain and indisposition soon perform the work of age, and

even before he reached middle life, had materially changed them. They became expanded, strong, and more expressive than handsome. When he spoke, or addressed any one, the amenity of his mind was diffused over his countenance, and rendered it peculiarly engaging.

The completion of the Union, Lord Charlemont did not live to see; and, had he lived, his sentiments, it is more than probable, would, on that head, have remained unchanged. A love for England, as well as his own country, influenced him in that respect, for few were more attached to our sister kingdom than he was. Whether, as to the Union, he was right or wrong, time alone, not the present hour, must determine. Many a novel scene, and many a change, must take place, before the durability of this new legislative fabric can be said to be fairly tried. Would that the mode, by which that fabric was raised, could be for ever effaced from the memory! but as that cannot be, let us endeavour to hope the best. Let us, in many instances, aspire to a higher policy than has hitherto fallen to the lot, or the wisdom of both countries to pursue; that policy, which alone merits such an epithet, the melioration of the condition of our peasantry,

the eternal exile of all proscribing systems from this country; the Union, not of legislatures merely, which would be found only in the statute book, but of hearts, of men, of Britons, of Irishmen, under whatever denomination, or civil, or religious, they may be now distinguished. So acting, the spirit of that good man, whose memory I have endeavoured, though with no cunning hand, to embalm, may be said to walk abroad, and live among us still; so acting, we shall prosper; so shall "pale invasion come with half a heart," and the well-ordered motto of the knighthood of St. Patrick, extend beyond the shield of that chivalry, and for ever encircle both countries. *Quis separabit?*

APPENDIX.

No. 1,—Vol. 1, p. 58.

The Titles of James, last Duke of Ormonde. He died, in exile, at Avignon, in France, 1745: The most noble and illustrious Prince, James, Duke of Ormonde, Earl of Brecknock, and Baron of Lanthony, and Moore Park in England; Duke, Marquis, and Earl of Ormonde, Earl of Ossory, Viscount Thurles, Baron of Dingle, and Arklow, in Ireland; Lord of the regalities and liberties, and Governor of the county Palatine of Tipperary, and of the city, town, and county of Kilkenny; Honorary Chief Butler of Ireland, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and Constable of Dover Castle; Lord Lieutenant of the county of Somerset, Lord Lieutenant, and Custos Rotulorum of the county of Norfolk; High Steward of the Cities of Exeter, Bristol, and Westminster; Chancellor of the Universities of Oxford and of Dublin; Colonel of the First Regiment of Foot Guards; Captain General, and Commander in Chief of all her Majesty's forces by sea and land; one of her Majesty's most honourable Privy Council in England, and in Ireland; Knight of the most noble order of the Garter, and Lord Lieutenant General, and General Governor of the kingdom of Ireland.

No. 2,—Vol. 1, p. 165.

It may not, perhaps, be unacceptable to explain the origin of this, and similar titles still existing in Ireland. Maurice Fitzgerald was, in 1329, created Earl of Desmond, with a royal jurisdiction, or *Palatinate* in the same, by patent, dated at Gloucester, 27th August, 3d Edward III. Count Palatine were termed *Palatini,* sive comites *Palatii,* as being principal officers or counsellors in the emperor's *palace.* The title did not become common till about the time of Charlemagne. King Henry II. erected *three* Palatinates in Ireland. King Edward III. granted the palatinate of *Ormonde* to the Earl of Ormonde, which continued in that family to the reign of George the 1st, when it was put down by act of Parliament, and was the last granted in Ireland. Every Count Palatine had a royal jurisdiction, and royal seigniory. In right of the first, he had the same courts and officers as the King, who had no jurisdiction in his liberty, none of the King's writs being of force therein, except writs of error, or appeals, which were generally excepted in their charters. By his royal seigniory, the Palatine had royal services, and royal escheats; by the first he could make tenures in *capite,* and *create barons.* Thus, the Palatines of Chester created the Barons of Haulton, Malpas, &c. The Palatines of Meath, in Ireland, had their Barons of Navan and Galtrim. The Palatines of Kildare, those of Narrow and Rhebane. The Earls of Ormonde created the Barons of Loghmoe and Burnt Church. The Earls of Desmond had their Barons of Ballykealy, the Baron of the Island, and also, their *Knights of Kerry,* Knights of the Glen, of the Valley, &c.*

* See Smith's history of Kerry.

No wonder if such enormous power was abused, and contributed so often to the ruin of those who possessed it. Dr. Sullivan justly remarks, that it was the cause, among other things, of the slowness of the settlement of Ireland.

No. 3,—Vol. 1, p. 362.

What might have been the consequences at that time, of Ireland acting in the manner Mr. Burke suggests, or, in other words opposing the American war, (supposing such an opposition) it is not easy to say. Could such an interference have been effectual, it would have, perhaps, prevented a lamentable waste of blood and treasure, and, possibly, for some time longer, have kept together the mother country and her colonies. Such a connexion, however, would not have been permanent. The dread of such an interposition on the part of Ireland, or the possibility of our differing from England, at some period or other, was unquestionably one of the principal arguments made use of at the time of the Union. It may not be superfluous to state, what was partly said in the Irish House of Commons, on the subject of the proposition, that any person had an equal right with the Prince of Wales to the regency. It never became a matter of direct debate *there*, but was constantly alluded to, during the regency question. It was said that, considering the possible effects of such a resolution, it was well for both countries, that their Parliaments stood as they did; for their mutual independence might act as a mutual check on the possible intemperance of either; and had there been any protracted controul of the Prince of Wales, the independence of the Irish Parliament might shelter the people of England from the effects of party ambition, for no minister would continue to act upon that resolution, with the certainty

of direct opposition to him on the part of the Parliament of Ireland. That, therefore, the independence of the two Parliaments constituted, if the phrase might be allowed, a sort of fourth estate, which would not suffer the possible occasional misconduct of either, and was, in fact, the best preservative of the connexion between the two countries. All this may, by those who are in the habit of disregarding Ireland, be considered as visionary, and the idea of any controul at any time, from the Parliament of this country, laughed at as extravagant. Certainly, their general proceedings encouraged no such speculations; but I can with truth assert, that this mode of reasoning was approved of by Mr. Burke, nay, assented to, in private, by Mr. Fitzgibbon; and to the acquiescence of those two eminent men, may be added the following historical document. It is now, I believe, very generally admitted, that the ministers, during the last four years of Queen Anne, were resolved, if possible, to bring back the son of James the Second, and place him on the throne of these kingdoms. From Ireland they expected every thing, but the Parliament of Ireland opposed them. Lord Middleton, a party man certainly, but a most able and upright senator, and magistrate, (he was Chancellor) writes in this manner of the Parliamentary Proceedings in Dublin at that time: "What effect that Session of Parliament had on the English councils, was visible in the succeeding Session of the British Parliament; at which time, it was generally believed, the court intended to have brought in a bill to empower the queen to have appointed her successor, but the vigorous proceedings of the Irish Parliament, in favour of the Protestant succession, cast such a damp on their proceedings,"* &c. In short, they abandoned the scheme. Such was the opinion of Lord Middleton, with regard to the superior efficacy, which

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*See the Middleton Papers, in the Orford Memoirs.

particular conjunctures might give to the Parliament of Ir eland Let it be remembered too, that this opinion was given, not in the heat of party, or debate, but in a private letter, long after the event, to a particular friend, and never, I presume, intended to meet the eye of the public. If such, therefore, was the power of the Irish Parliament, according to Lord Middleton, at the beginning of the last century, when it was as nothing, compared to the Parliament in 1789, it will not be said, that too fond an opinion of its powers was entertained by Lord Charlemont or his friends. Such questions are indeed now at rest, and, if statesmen act fairly, so much the better. But let not their obliquity be adroitly metamorphosed into turbulence, or disaffection, on the part of those who may oppose them.

No. 4,—Vol. 1, p. 400.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS,
Regiæ Academiæ preses,
Pictorum sui sæculi
Facile princeps.
Suspendit picta vultum, mentemque tabella.

The head of the rising English school.
Who formed his pupils,
Not only by his example,
But by his precepts.
Nor yet content with excelling all men
In this his favourite science,
He surpassed in all the qualities
Which depend on the genius, or the heart,
And richly endowed with every accomplishment,

With every grace,
And with every virtue,
In all his numerous and various works,
He never pourtrayed a more amiable,
Nor a better man
Than himself.

" Would you not deem it breathed, and that those veins
" Did verily bear blood ?"

——— Liquidis ille coloribus
Solers nunc hominem, ponere nunc deum.

No. 5,—Vol. 2, p. 226.

Inscription under the bust of the Marquis of Rockingham, by Lord Charlemont, and referred to in the letters of the Marchioness and Mr. Burke.

The most noble, Charles Watson Wentworth,
Marquis of Rockingham,
On whose Character,
A consciousness of partiality would prevent my expatiating,
If I were not confident,
That the utmost ardour of friendship may be necessary
To give warmth to a delineation,
Which, even thus inspired, must fall far short of his merits.
Genuine patriotism, unshaken fortitude,
And immaculate honour,
Dignified his public conduct.
While his private life
Was marked, adorned, and sweetened

By every elegance of taste,
By all the tender endearments of friendship,
And by the constant practice of every social duty.
A Patron of all the Arts, useful and ornamental,
His Perspicuity discovered,
His Influence protected, his Liberality encouraged,
His Courtesy distinguished, and animated
Innumerable Votaries to true Genius,
Whose modest Merit might otherwise have been concealed,
And lost to their Country.
As a Minister,
History will best speak his Praise.
He rescued the Dominions committed to his charge,
From the rage of Faction,
And the destructive tendency of Unconstitutional Principles;
In his first Administration,
His Conciliatory Endeavours were effectual
To the Restoration of Harmony
Between Great Britain and her Colonies;
Which Blessing was, however, quickly forfeited
By a fatal change of men and measures.
Public Necessity,
And the Voice of the People,
Again called him to the helm of the sinking State,
Which, though now reduced to the last extremity,
By weak and evil governance,
Was saved from impending destruction,
By his persevering skill and courage.
The most jarring and discordant spirits
Were harmonized and kept together,
By the love of his Person, the reverence for his Character,
And the universal confidence in his honesty.

Upon him, as the great centre of attraction,
The confidence, and consequent safety of the whole depended,
He found the Empire involved in the fatal consequences
Of short-sighted, arbitrary and tyrannic Policy,
When, following the dictates of wisdom,
And of justice,
He gave Peace and Security to his Native Land,
Liberty to America,
And coinciding with the unparalleled efforts
Of her virtuous Sons,
Restored her rights to Ireland.
As his Life was the support,
His death had nearly been the ruin
Of the British Empire,
As if his lamenting Country
Had been loth to survive her darling Son,
Her friend, her benefactor, her preserver.
M. S. P.
CHARLEMONT.

There are many parts of the above Inscription, which are touched with equal truth, elegance, and delicacy. But I wish that Lord Charlemont, who so well understood, and relished some of the Greek Epigrams, or Inscriptions, had adopted their exquisite, chaste, and beautiful simplicity, and brevity, rather than the style which he has chosen; which, if more compressed, would, in my opinion, have been more impressive. It is, in some parts, too diffuse.

Directly under the bust.

This striking resemblance of her departed Lord,
Perpetual source of her grief, and pride!

Was the precious gift
Of Mary, Marchioness of Rockingham,
Under whose painful inspection,
And pious care,
Exerted in behalf of his ever-lamenting friend,
And by the help of whose faithful memory,
The model was made.
1788.

No. 6,—Vol. 2, p. 308.

Extract from the Secretary of State (Mr. Hutchinson's) Speech, in 1793.

" But what was the history of the representation in this country? He could inform gentlemen with some accuracy, having thought it his duty, when he took a more active part in public business, to extract from all the borough charters, at the Rolls Office, their material contents. The number of representatives in the thirty-fourth year of Henry VIII. was one hundred; to this number Mary and Elizabeth added about forty-eight, but of these were nineteen counties, of which Elizabeth had established seventeen, a mode of representation worthy the character of that great princess. In the first Parliament of James I. held in 1613, the members of the House of Commons were 232; the last creation of a borough was by Queen Anne, who created one only: For the difference between the number of representatives at the accession of James, and the present number of 300, the House of Stuart is responsible. One half of the representatives were made by them, and made by the exertion of prerogative; of those James made

forty at one stroke; most of them at the eve of a Parliament, and some after the writs of summons had issued. The Commons in that Parliament expressed their doubts whether those boroughs had the power of returning members to sit in Parliament, and reserved that subject for future consideration. Complaints were made to James of those grants, but what was his answer? 'I have made 40 boroughs; suppose I had made 400—the more the merrier.' Charles I. followed the example of his father in exercising this prerogative, but not to so great an extent. Complaints were also made to him, and he gave assurances, that the new corporations should be reviewed by Parliament. The grants made by these two monarchs appear, by the histories and correspondences of those times, to have been for the purpose of giving the Protestants a majority over the Roman Catholics. The grants by Charles II. James II. and Queen Anne, proceeded from motives of personal favour; thus it would appear, if the facts were investigated, that one-half of the representation of Ireland had arisen from the exertions of prerogative, influenced by occasional motives, disputes among religionists, and inducements of personal favour, but had not been derived from any of those sources which had produced the English constitution. Had he the honour of being a member of the British House of Commons, he would never touch the venerable fabric of their representation; but in this kingdom, the part of the representation universally complained of, had originated in party or private motives; and he did not believe there was one prescriptive borough in the whole kingdom. He believed some boroughs were called so, but he believed unjustly, eleven of the grants which had been mentioned, did not appear at the Rolls Office, but most of these were *modern* in the time of the *House of Stuart*."

No. 7,—Vol. 2, p. 352.

Lord Camden. Under a print of his Lordship is the following Inscription by Lord Charlemont.

Charles, Earl Camden ;
Whose Character it is unnecessary to delineate,
His name alone being sufficient
To raise every sentiment of love and veneration,
In the minds of all who know him ;
And unfortunate are they
Who know him not.
Endowed with the most eminent abilities,
They have ever been employed in the cause of justice,
In the support of liberty,
And in the service of his Country.
And such are his virtues, public and private,
That he would have been conspicuous,
And illustrious,
Even in the most virtuous age.
What must he then be
In the present times ?

No. 8,—Vol. 2, p. 437.

SIR JOSEPH BANKS,
President of the Royal Society,
By whom this Print,
A private one,
Unpublished,
Was kindly presented to me,
His old friend and acquaintance.
Eager in the search of knowledge,
Though blest with all the gifts of fortune,
He left his native home;
And defying the dangers and hardships
Of a voyage round the terraqueous globe,
He returned to enrich his country,
With the discovery of new regions, and new men;
And with an improvement to natural history,
His favourite study,
Which adds splendour to the present enlightened age.

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